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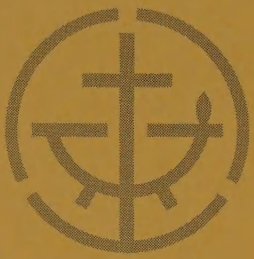
CHRISTUS VICTOR

by

HENRY NEHEMIAH DODGE



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Christus Victor

A STUDENT'S REVERIE

BY

HENRY NEHEMIAH DODGE

SEVENTH THOUSAND
ILLUSTRATED

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World-Saviour, see me at Thy feet
Awe-stricken; in my hands, for Thine unmeet,
My heart's best treasure dearly bought
With tears and travail, and with trembling brought.
If in this casket Thou shouldst find
Aught to adorn Thy way or serve mankind,
Though not myrrh, frankincense, or gold —
Tribute of star-led caravans of old —
Take it, O Heart of Love Divine,
And use it as Thou wilt, for it is Thine.

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Carl Hirschberg 1894
Adapted from the original
etching by F. Bartolozzi after
the painting by
Guercino da Cento

PRELUDE

SEE on His mother's gentle breast,
The infant Saviour sink to rest;
Soon will she lay His baby head
In peace upon His manger-bed;
Sleep, little Jesu, sleep awhile,
Then bless us with Thy waking smile.

Angels, sing some sweet lullaby,
Soft echoes from the blissful sky;
Sing, angels, sing to all the earth
The story of His lowly birth;
Look, sons of men—a wondrous sight—
Love new-born, with resistless might!

This dimpled form, so soft and fair,
The burdens of a world shall bear;

These tender feet, so small and weak,
For us, where'er we stray, shall seek;
These little arms outstretched shall be
For all mankind, on Calvary.

Wake, Child, the nations need Thee, wake!
The mighty now Thy vassals make;
Subdue their stubborn wills to Thine,
O'ermastered by a touch divine —
Let Conquering Love fierce passions tame
And get new glory to Thy name.

Swathed in love's peerless majesty,
Lead warring nations after Thee,
That following they may find Thy way
To light and peace, and in that day
Forever, at Thy bidding, sheathe their swords,
And hail Thee King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

ARGUMENT

IN an old New England farmhouse a student sits in meditation; a fierce storm raging without, his lamp and fire dimly burning within, his closed book before him, and the skeleton which he has been studying beside him.

Falling into a train of reflection upon the human form, he is led to think of the undeveloped powers and the future life of that being whose frame has long engrossed his study.

After various meditations upon the immortal life into which, as in a vision, he sees an endless flood of souls rising from the earth, his mind is filled with questioning thoughts as to the final destiny of mankind, feeling that an all-wise God whose nature is love, must have designed the human race which He created, for happiness and holiness at last.

The student is overawed by the immensity of the thought and by those teachings of the Scriptures which appear to conflict with such an idea. Whereupon he is led to consider one or two typical passages usually held to support a contrary view, and as his mind begins to rest upon a hopeful solution of the question, other objections of a philosophical character relating to freedom, law, etc., rise to confront him.

After considering these and some other questions to which they lead, and still feeling that Love must in the end be triumphant in spite of all the vast opposing forces, he appeals to the risen Saviour to show the manner and extent of His victory, that his soul may rest in quiet on a sure foundation.

The Saviour relates to him the experience of His passion as a pledge of His final and complete victory over evil.

Perfect peace takes possession of the student's mind as he hears a chant of triumph sung by the heavenly hosts, hailing the sure victory of love.

The writer's treatment of his subject is but fragmentary, as indeed befits so vast a theme; so vast that it will not suffer itself to be cramped within the formalities of an orderly arrangement, but

rather, like drifting fragments of a wondrous vision, kindles the imagination with faint, disjointed glimpses of the mighty whole which may not yet be grasped in the fulness of its majesty.

Like the musician haunted by some sweet, elusive melody, now leading, now driving him from key to key, from stop to stop of his instrument, the writer seeks through diverse forms of rhythm and measure some expression for the unutterable joy of divine harmony that has stirred his soul.

PROLOGUE

O HEAVENLY DOVE, thy quickening influence give,
Brood o'er my helpless thoughts and make them live;
Strengthen and clothe my feeble, fledgeling words,
That they may fly abroad like happy birds;
That they to saddened hearts new hope may bear,
And with long-troubled minds their gladness share;
New light within some darkened chamber fling —
Sunlight swift glancing from a passing wing —
Till joy shall take the place of doubt's dull pain
And the fainthearted one fresh courage gain;
Some scoffer learn how great the love he spurns,
That like a home lamp for his coming burns;
Some wavering soldier buckle on his sword
And hasten to the warfare of his Lord.

Come, Holy Spirit, touch my heart with fire,
Set free my stammering tongue and tune my lyre,
That I to my high theme new powers may bring,
The triumph of Almighty Love to sing!

Spent as a wounded bird
Fallen afield unheard,
My voice was mute.

Silent and hurt I lay,
While breathed afar all day
Spring's mellow flute.

Within me struggled long
Faint hope and dream of song,
My heart was numb.

Slow came each tuneless day,
Went its mysterious way,
And I lay dumb.

When, lo, a Heavenly voice
Bade my dead heart rejoice —
Eternal spring!

" Sing of the times to be,
Of justice, liberty,
Truth's glory sing.

" Sing of the reign of love
Descending from above ;
Take thou my lute !

" For this I wounded thee,
That thou might'st sing for me
Thy longings mute."

Awake, oh lute, from silent sleep,
My heart is hotly urging ;
Awake and sing the mighty deep
With tide and tempest surging !

My ship the heaving billow rolls,
The reeling mast a-swaying ;
O, Guide of storm-beat, questing souls,
Keep Thou my keel from straying !

'Gainst wind and current on my course
I plunge, vast waters ploughing;
The cruel ocean ravens hoarse,
Lone requiem voices soughing.

Though storm and doubt my valor test,
Let not my soul be craven:
O, Pilot, lead me to the rest
Of truth's far-shining haven!

Christus Victor:

A STUDENT'S REVERIE

I

LOUD storms the tempest, heaven is black with rage;
The headlong winds have broken every bond,
And savage blasts go scouring through the sky
As if a demon-hag with her foul imps
Swept shrieking down the night: a direful crew,
Fore-runners of some dread calamity.
Fierce glares the lightning, loud the thunders roar,
And swollen clouds pour down long treasured wrath.
Grim gnarlèd oaks writhe groaning in the gale,
Like harassed souls, struggling with doubt and fear—

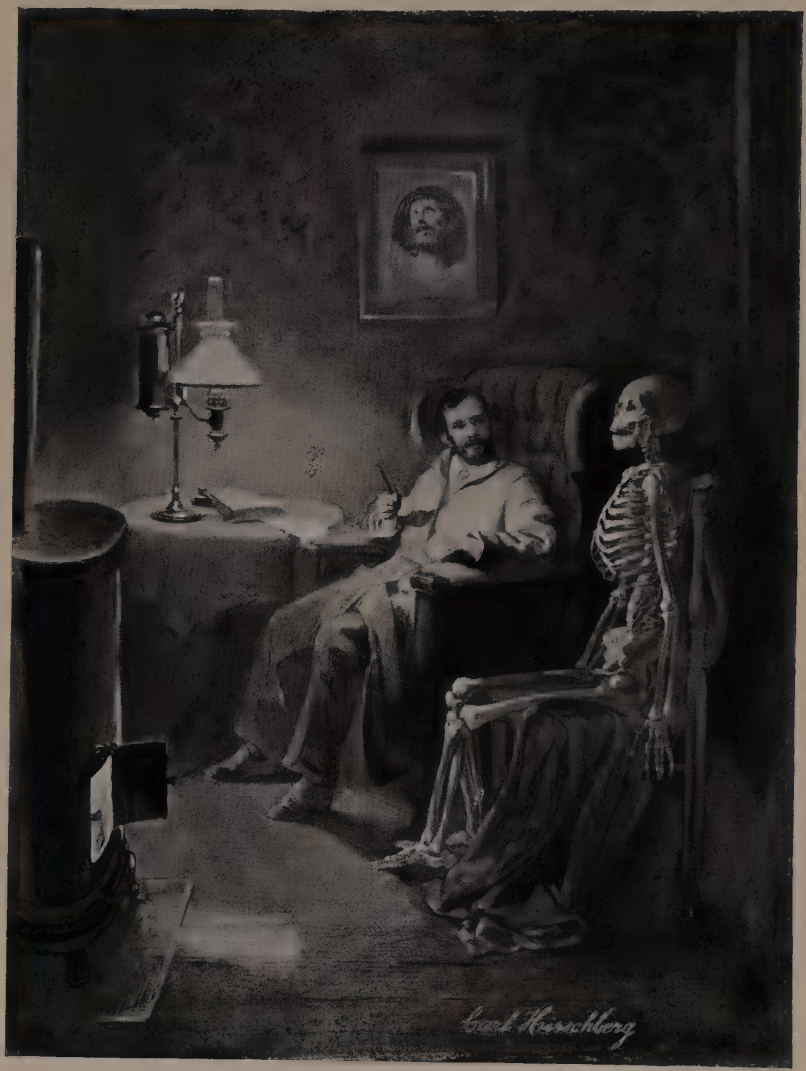
Brave hearts, though torn, unconquered by the storm!—
Hoarse gusts with ghostly cries besiege the house
And, shuddering, prowl about from door to door,
Now shake the casements, now with sad complaint
Hiss through the shivering crannies, "Let us in!"
The blazing firebrands cast a lurid glare
Over the room, making weird shadows dance
Fantastic measures to the wild refrain.
My book is closed, and night wears slowly on
The while I muse, in drifting reverie lost:

II

What is this that sits beside me!
Who my guest this fearful night?
Whose these pallid, ghostly features
Shining in the fitful light?

Spectral face of doubtful meaning—
Was it but the flickering gleam
Of the flame which from that visage
Caused a deathly smile to beam?

Was it that the sudden shudder
Of the storm-wind's gusty flaws


Carl Hirschberg

Made a sound like hollow laughter
  Gurgle through those fleshless jaws ?

Ha, 't was not a laugh he uttered,
  Long ago that voice was hushed;
Long it is since grief or pleasure
  From that withered bosom gushed.

Those white limbs of his are lifeless,
  And that jaw is fixed and stern,
And his orbless sockets, glaring,
  Never from the embers turn.

III

O grisly phantom of a man,
I know not how thy story ran,
Or whether thou wert stern of face
Or wreathed with smiles of winsome grace
Or whence thy footsteps hither came,
Or what thy lineage or name;
Howe'er unknown the tale may be,
Yet wert thou fellow-man to me.

Nay, leave thy rigid hand in mine,
For I thy secret would divine;

How oft mine eyes have run thee o'er
To con the cabalistic lore
Deep carved on every glistening bone,
As I have sat with thee alone,
Searching for each minute detail
That aught my purpose might avail:
But now upon this grewsome night
I see thee in a fairer light;
What is it binds my life to thee,
What thread of common destiny?

Of what avail is all the strife,
The stress and toil of human life,
If this wan spectre is the goal,
The final answer to the soul?
Yet night doth so oppress my heart
With solitude and storm, thou art
A welcome comrade, though I trace
Scant fellowship in thy hard face.
I can but feel, whoe'er thou art,
That in my life thou hadst a part,
That in thy lineaments I see
One who is somehow knit to me,
Whose life and mine, for ill or good,
Join in a mystic brotherhood.

Lo, this is but a ruined home
Whose tenant now afar doth roam,
This habitation left behind
Some statelier palace dome to find.
Here once an eager spirit dwelt
Who all our common passion felt;
His humble cot these crumbling walls
Where now my voice so vainly calls.
Once blithesome laughter echoed here,
And pain's lament, and cries of fear.
This stony face that naught can move
Once answered to the tones of love,
As, rocked upon a mother's breast,
Her sheltering arms this form caressed.

What songs of joy were lightly trilled,
What rapture once this bosom filled,
What throes of pain these members shook
Ere he this tenement forsook!
But ere the spirit went his way,
Leaving this ruin to decay,
Was there no missive hidden here,
No word of greeting for my ear;
Did he no message leave with thee,
O Shadow of Humanity?

IV

Why shrink away from this grim skeleton ?
For here is beauty. See, each curving bone
Is carved and fashioned by a skilful hand
And fitted to its fellow, while the whole
For strength is built, a marvel of design.
With cunning art the supple joints are wrought,
Suited to complex movements manifold.
Here is a channel deeply grooved to guard
Some tender vessel from all outward harm.
These serried ribs protect the beating heart
And with each surging breath, as billows, heave;
These bones rise dome-like over reason's throne.

V

This framework of a man, with tension strong
Full many a cord and band together knit,
And hold each timber of the spirit's house
Firmly in its appointed place; then all
The busy joints are freed from friction's heat,
As the soft oil prevents the noisy clang
Of mighty engines, or the rattling loom.

VI

See where the swelling muscles next were placed;
Fold upon fold they lie, a ruddy mass,
The seat of strength, like strands close intertwined.
Here is the source of labor's sturdy blows,
And skill of fingers as they deftly fly,
Making the softest music; here the touch
Of hands that tells of love.

VII

Through every part
A labyrinthic network winds, like some
Far-clambering vine whose wide-extended arms
Bear heavy clusters fraught with ruby wine.
Through swelling arteries with ceaseless flow
The stream of life comes rushing from the heart.
O heart, so steadfast in thy lifelong task,
Unfaltering day and night, from youth to age,
Thou strange, unfathomed fount of weal and woe!
As a wild torrent chafes its banks and roars
With recent rain, so leaps this crimson stream
When passions burn; as gentle waters flow
'Neath summer sun, so glides this current on
When peace and health hold sway, bearing new strength
Upon its waves.

VIII

The whole with art divine
Is rounded to the matchless form of man,
Modelled for beauty, strength, and majesty;
Lord of the earth, erect, facing the heavens,
Of all created forms the masterpiece.
And over all a silken vestment spreads,
Now mantling with the bloom and rose of youth,
Now blanched with age, or pain, or withering fear.
And on the head, like to a crown of glory
Or a strong helmet, see the thick, crisp hair
That lends its beauty to the manly face;
Or sunny tresses with their glorious wealth
White shoulders hiding, flowing down to drape
The graceful form with their luxuriance
As, mirrored first in Eden's crystal fount,
Eve, wondering, saw her glowing beauty shine
Fairer than first awoke the blushing morn
To meet the flashing eye of amorous day,
Fairer than the silvery moon on Paradise.

IX

Ah, who can tell the marvels of the eye,
Where thought, expectant, in its watch-tower
waits—

Designed & Engraved by J. Martin. Esq.

A wondrous lens that pictures to the mind
The beauty and the terror of the world;
Mysterious mirror, deep, unfathomable;
The eye of man, before whose fearless gaze
The lion slinks affrighted to his lair;
A glowing beacon-light that flashes forth
On friend or foe the flames of love or hate
From pent up fires.

X

Hark how the song of birds,
The merry laughter or the cry of pain,
The muttering thunder and the ocean's roar,
Through the mysterious chambers of the ear
Are echoed to the soul that dwells within!

XI

Here sounds the voice, that peerless instrument.
With gentle tones it lulls the babe to rest,
And murmurs words of love and tenderness;
With stern commands directs the strife of men,
Where nations struggle on the field of war;
Swayed by the magic of its eloquence
The hearts of thousands beat with one accord;

And, when it soars upon the wings of song,
High above earth and all its sordid care,
The souls of men are touched with fire, and rise
Consumed with longings fierce, impetuous,
That storm across the spirit roused from sleep
And raise a wild commotion in the deep.

XII

Lord over all, the brain, thought's mighty vassal,
Sits like a despot ruling by his will;
A thousand messengers await his nod
To bear his mandates with the lightning's speed.
Within this convoluted maze what powers,
What energies, what aspirations dwell,
And from their narrow cell reach forth to shake
The world, yea, dare to grasp the universe!

XIII

Before such lavish beauty of design
I stand in awe, and contemplate the throng
Of earth's unnumbered children, each one made
With skill so wonderful. Here we behold
The culmination of a mighty plan;

Each step, advancing from the lower depths
Of reptile life, displays a clearer mark
Of nearer likeness to creation's head.
This chain of life ascending, who shall trace
The spirit's frame? Ah, who with wondering eye
Shall penetrate the soul's anatomy,
The texture of the immortal man disclose,
Or watch the ethereal spirit poise for flight
Released from earth's reluctant, clinging clay—
That form which still in glowing youth shall live
When all the starry hosts of heaven have passed?

XIV

New wonders crowding thick on every side
My soul is dazzled with infinity,
And prostrate falls before Eternal Love,
Adoring Him, our Father and our God,
Whose glory fills the wide earth and the heavens,
Whose might created and whose will sustains.
He stamped His image on each human soul
And made us godlike in our mortal state;
He made our flesh His temple glorious,
Filled full of light divine; our weakness, strength;
Our death, the way to immortality.

XV

They judge not rightly who, the husk earth-stained
Seeing, ignore the precious seed within.
Could we but read aright the germs divine
Hid in this perishing frame, waiting the growth
Of countless ages and millenniums,
What eye could bear the glory of the sight
Blinded before the majesty revealed,
As 't were the Lord of Light he looked upon,
So blends the finite with the infinite,
So close allied is man with Deity.
Each generation as it comes and goes
New powers evolves, greater dominion grasps,
And clearer vision of our birthright gains.
And when these germs shall feel the Eternal Spring
Breathing upon them, each shall wake to bloom
Of deathless beauty, unfolding leaf by leaf,
As the fair rosebud opens to the sun,
Each petal sweet with fragrance all its own,
Distilled from early dew, from sweat, from tears
Of earth, seethed in the slow retorts of God.

XVI

What man soe'er I chance to see—
Amazing thought—is kin to me,
And if a man, my brother!

What though in silken raiment fine
His form be clad, while naked mine;
He is a man, my brother.

What though with flashing chariot wheel
He spurn my cry, nor pity feel;
He is a man, my brother.

What though he sit in royal state
And for an empire legislate;
He is a man, my brother.

What though of strange and alien race,
Of unfamiliar form and face;
He is a man, my brother.

What though his hand be hard with toil
And labor his worn garment soil;
He is a man, my brother.

What though ashamed, with drooping head,
He beg a morsel of my bread;
He is a man, my brother.

What though he grovel at my feet,
Spurned by the rabble of the street;
He is a man, my brother.

What though his hand with crime be red,
His heart a stone, his conscience dead;
He is a man, my brother.

And when we pass upon the street
It is my brother that I meet;
Alas, alas, my brother!

Though low his life, and black his heart,
There is a nobler, deathless part
Within this man, my brother.

The soul which this frail clay enfolds
The image of its Maker holds—
That makes this man my brother.

Though dimly there that image shine,
It marks the soul a thing divine,
A child of God, my brother.

For him the spotless Son of God,
The Perfect Man, our pathway trod,
To show Himself our Brother.

Nor walks the earth so vile a wretch
But down to him that love doth stretch,
As to an only brother.

Though deep the abyss with darkness lower,
'T is but the measure of His power
Who thence will raise my brother.

A Saviour to the uttermost,
He will not see His brother lost,
Nigh ruined, yet His brother.

XVII

Hold back thy hand,
And reverent stand
Before this image of thy God.
See in this face
Some latent trace
Of Him who raised thee from the sod.

Long shadows, cast
By ages past,
Now blur and stain this image fair;
The hate and crime
Of bygone time
Still guard their ancient stronghold there.

In this dark life,
With turmoil rife,
But coarse and stunted flowers bloom;
Thy lilies fair
Ne'er blossomed there—
What blighting curse has been his doom?

These records old
A tale unfold
Of foul disease and low desires;
Here vice now breeds
Its poison seeds,
Transmitted from a hundred sires.

Gaunt Famine's hand
Here placed its brand—
Canst thou for him no pity feel?—
War's hurt and scar
These features mar,
Long trampled by the oppressor's heel.

Justice and Right,
Behold the blight,
And blush to think where lies the blame!
In this low face
See your disgrace,
The blood-writ story of your shame.

Here impious Greed
Doth vengeance breed,
Portent of wrath's insanity;
How dare ye scorn
This wreck, storm-torn,
This derelict on life's vexed sea!

O sons of power,
Beware the hour
When God to judgment summons Greed;
In that wild day,
Though loud ye pray,
Your cry the Avenger may not heed.

My brother, cursed
With mortal thirst,
Ye lure where fiery lava flows;
For gold ye sell
Fierce draughts from Hell
That fill a drunken world with woes.

Before you see
Humanity
Despoiled, disfigured; from this face
Cry myriad slain
For lust of gain;
Ah, who shall Greed's foul scars erase?

Why must ye wait
Until too late:
Till Nemesis unsheathe her sword?
Love yet might take
This wretch and make
A man of him!—Forgive us, Lord!

From this dark heart
A stream might start,
Called forth by your good word or deed,
And, flowing, bless
Some wilderness
Whose harvests men unborn would feed.

Make less his load,
Forbear your goad;
Help him to know your fairer life;
Soon, soon for all
The night will fall,
And hushed will be the toil and strife.

XVIII

Suppose a kindly word of mine
Could lift the clouds and bring sunshine;
Am I my brother's keeper?

Suppose the weary worker toils,
For scanty pittance delves and moils;
Am I my brother's keeper?

Suppose in penury and fear
My neighbor see the wolf draw near;
Am I my brother's keeper?

Suppose beneath a tyrant's heel
Some distant nation anguish feel;
Am I my brother's keeper?

Perhaps—who knows?—perhaps I 'm not!
Self-centred soul! hast thou forgot
The marvel of our common lot,
The mystic tie that binds us all
Who dwell on this terrestrial ball,
Stupendous hope of time and song,
The bourne for which the ages long?
How hard our hearts must seem to Thee,
Exhaustless Fount of Charity!

XIX

See where the sun, in fiery splendor sinking,
Shoots down his rays athwart the misty clouds;

After his journey, cooling vapors drinking,
Ere he his face in growing darkness shrouds.

If the great sun, with life awakening power,
From ocean's breast, from stream, and lake, and fen
Rich treasure draw, wherewith the earth to dower
When poured upon the parchèd ground again;

Cannot the Lord, the will of man compelling
By love's attractive power to seek His face,
Awaken life where'er He makes His dwelling,
Amid the scattered kindreds of the race;

Awake new life, in blessèd fountains flowing
From hearts unused to seek another's good;
Streaming to every land, forever growing
Unto a universal brotherhood?

XX

How dream-like and unstable is the form
That wraps the spirit in its earthly veil!
In ceaseless flight the wingèd atoms haste
From earth and sea and air—a rescuing host—
To build anew this fast dissolving frame

That with each movement, with each thought casts
off
The perished cells which die that we may live.
This solid flesh so firm is but a shape,
A candle flame that seems from hour to hour
The same in form, unchanged in brilliancy;
Yet through the flame there flows a ceaseless stream
Of particles ablaze with heat, that give
Themselves its form and beauty to maintain.
As burns this candle flame with passing days
From infancy to age, what flitting shapes,
What weakness, vigor, and decrepitude
Hide from our view the ever-constant soul!
We feel faint stirrings of immortal youth
And start with wonder at our fading flesh;
And when this changing mask we have outgrown
Or when the Lord of Life shall call us hence,
Then shall we suddenly be clothed upon
With some more glorious form of vaster powers.

XXI

'T is certain thou must die, and even now
The lines are closing in that shall one day—
How soon thou knowest not—converge on thee.

And when that messenger shall summon thee
He will not brook delay, nor let thee tarry,
Though urgent business need thee sore, though schemes
Long nursed by thee, from year to year, be ripe
Thy soul to gladden with their guerdon fair.
The house thou buildest thou may'st not complete;
The ship thou loadest may not put to sea;
Thou may'st not bid thy dearest friend farewell,
Nor speak thy treasured message to the world,
Though nations listen, waiting for thy word.
Why dost thou fear? All men must pass that way;
Death would not come to all were 't not a boon.
Lest we these rudimentary gifts should hold
Of too great moment are we hurried hence;
Love is not satisfied that we should stay
From our inheritance too long away.

XXII

"Why dost thou drive me so, insatiate one?
Is 't not enough from dawn to setting sun?
Me with thy schemes thou dost so active keep,
I fain would find oblivion in sleep.
Once had I rest and peace ere thee I knew,

Where 'mid the grass and flowers the wild birds
flew;
But since the day myself to thee I gave,
Naught hast thou done but grind me as thy slave."

" Oh, I am weary of thy long complaint,
Thy tales of woe, thy fears lest thou shouldst faint,
Thy constant cries for food, for rest, for sleep,
That would my strong desire in bondage keep!
Long have I nursed thee, waited on thy need,
Kept low my fires thy smouldering flame to feed;
Oft wondered why thy burdens I must bear,
And why thou too my longing couldst not share.
Peace! Had I driven thee to my full desire,
Long since wouldst thou have perished of my fire.
Soon may'st thou rest amid thy grass and flowers,
But I shall haste away to try my immortal powers

XXIII

The savage bending o'er a pool
Beholds his image, eye to eye,
And gazing on that dusky face
Recoils amazed—he knows not why.

At noon upon a grassy knoll
The wearied reaper scans the sky;
The harvest grows, the cloud floats on —
Has he forgot that he must die?

The restless worker delves and dreams
While round the sun the seasons fly;
He builds for more than mortal years,
As though he were not soon to die.

High o'er the city's muffled roar
His silent turrets greet the sky;
He soars above the sordid earth,
Forgetful that he there must lie.

Across the scholar's dusty page
The centuries toil beneath his eye;
He sees the nations rise and fall,
Forgetting he himself must die.

O heart, thine intuition trust,
Dream on of greater things to be;
Thou feelest thou art more than dust,
And thou wouldst know thy destiny.

XXIII *a*

Why dost thou glare so fierce,
O Death, as thou wouldst pierce,
With thine uplifted dart,
My sinking heart?

Yet though men fear thee so
Wherever thou dost go,
And tremble at thy feet,
Thou art a cheat!

Though men thy pity crave,
Though naught from thee can save,
Thy Master rules above,
Thou servest Love.

XXIII *b*

A thrill of dreaming stirs the fairy dell,
The winter melts, rootlet and moss-tuft swell.

A faint, delicious odor! Whence, ah, whence
This breath of Spring that ravishes my sense?

Twineth some peerless wood-nymph in her hair
Immortal blossoms, for this world too fair?

Is it the rose-leaf of love's first-born kiss,
Trembling with rapture of unmeasured bliss?

Ah, no, no, no! Thou need'st no further go,
Sweet Arbutus is waking at thy feet in snow!

XXIII *c*

From night's lone realms I woke to hear
A strain of bird-song sweet and clear;
Yet was 't the birds, or had I dreamed?
But yestermorn it winter seemed!
Why is it the brave robins sing
So tuneful this inclement spring,
Though skies be dull, though airs be keen,
Nor swelling bud, nor flower be seen?
O minstrels glad, what brought you here,
Where have you been all winter drear?
Come you to herald the return
Of days when blushing roses burn?
Not yet, not yet, it is too soon;
Your song foretells a greater boon.

Robins, you need not tell the rest,
Your happy secret I have guessed;
And sing your sweetest well you may —
Oh life, oh love, oh blissful day!

XXIII *d*

What is it makes thee pensive, Spring?
Why dost thou not, as ever, sing?
What hushes now thy tuneful voice
When with thy birds thou should'st rejoice?
Why did the blood-root come so late,
The violet and anemone,
As if for someone they did wait;
For some dear face they longed to see?

One dog-wood in the whitening lane
Blooms red this year as if in pain,
And even the apple-blossoms fail
Their witching perfume to exhale.
What is it ails thee, gentle Spring?
I long to hear thee laugh and sing;
I 'm longing for the luscious smell
Of lilacs that I love so well.

Why sit'st thou moping in thy bower
Because thou missest one dear flower,
And wilt not even stoop to dally
With thine own lily-of-the-valley?
The flower thou lov'st will soon appear,
The sweetest flower of all the May;
Hark, hark, she 's coming, dost not hear?
Then brush that foolish tear away!

XXIII *e*

Hid in the chrysalis, this grovelling worm
Lies heedless of the storm and winter's cold,
Until the spring with beauty clothes the field —
Now vocal with sweet song, now hushed and still,
Save where the wood-dove blows his mellow horn —
And June with roses crowns the blossoming year.
Then, breaking from its withered tenement,
This dormant life to larger freedom wakes;
In splendor clothed, it flits from flower to flower,
With jewels on its rainbow-tinted wings,
A living blossom, fairest of them all!

XXIV

A tomb was built of massive stones,
Fast clamped with many an iron band;
Below, among ancestral bones,
Lay the last noble of the land.

"Closed be this tomb, these stones unmoved,"
So ran the legend graven deep,
"Their line is done, their worth is proved,
Let them in peace forever sleep."

A tiny seed came floating by,
Borne gently on the summer breeze,
A living germ, not doomed to die,
Offspring of sturdy forest trees.

It fell to earth unheard, unseen,
Within a little crevice lay,
And slumbered there in peace serene,
Unknown, unnoticed, many a day.

Its rootlet slowly downward crept
Through narrow paths with granite walled,

Where long-dead generations slept;
Nor was it by the gloom appalled.

Its fibres grappled with the dead
That dwelt in ghastly grandeur there;
Upon their mouldering ashes fed,
Transmuting dust to verdure fair.

Into the air the seedling sped,
The tree rejoicing sought the light;
Its branches triumphed o'er the dead
That long had lain in slumberous night.

Till, nourished by the sun and rain,
It gathered strength from day to day;
Then rent its mighty bonds in twain
And rolled the granite rocks away.

The sunlight trespassed in the tomb,
The breezes laughed with fragrant breath,
New life dispelled the ancient gloom
And mocked the vaunted power of death!

XXIV *a*

Summer winds, come, gently breathe
Secrets of the Mother Heart,
Of whose life my life is part.

Summer winds, I feel her near—
Mother Nature whispers low,
As your dreamy vespers flow.

Ask her, winds, for me, I pray:
Whither now hath flown the song
Into silence hushed so long?

Ask, entreat her to declare
What of storm and wreck untold,
Winter's fierce, relentless cold?

Summer winds, can it be true
That hope's vision is a dream,
Idly drifting on the stream?

Summer winds, say, can you tell,
Does she pity our despair,
Does our Mother Nature care?

Summer winds, bring soothing balm
From sweet spice-lands far away,
Nestling in the dawn of day.

Summer winds, come, whisper strange
Lore of ocean's rayless deep,
Where unfathomed wonders sleep!

. . . . . .

Then made answer murmurs low,
Breathing soft, æolian sound,
Pouring fragrance all around:

"Mother Nature bids us say:
Canst thou not her silence trust
Who calls roses from the dust?

"Canst thou not her time abide
Who with fruitage crowns the year?
Courage, child! thou need'st not fear."

XXIV *b*

I know a grove whose odorous pines
  Breathe gentle whispers to the sea;
And there, when summer's glory shines,
  I love to bask in reverie.

Yearly my footsteps thither turn,
  There, year by year, the wild flowers blow;
The winters fly, the summers burn—
  Sweet hours, why must ye hasten so!

There dreaming in the murmurous air
  Athrill with forest minstrelsy,
I mourned the death of all things fair—
  The silence and the mystery.

Midway the path that thither led
  A tremor seemed the soil to stir,
When, lo, I saw a tiny head
  Thrust forth, as from a sepulchre!

Up-rose a form in armor clad—
Ah, how he struggled to be free!
A visage keen and stern he had,
Like one who 's bent on liberty.

Deep had he lain in darksome night,
Long years had marked his narrow round,
But suddenly he longed for light,
And upward strove till light he found.

Cased in a coat of jointed mail,
Sturdy each obstacle he fought;
Nor might the stubborn earth avail
To keep him from the light he sought.

Joyous he burst upon the day,
And gained the welcome of the sun;
The dust of conflict on him lay—
Hail, hero, hail, the fight is won!

Yet never paused he, did not stay
To scan the world that he had found,
But eager hurried on his way,
As he had planned it underground;

Forthwith betook him to a pine,
As he were hastening for his life,
His path was straight—an arrowy line
Shot to the goal of all his strife.

High on the rugged bark he crept,
Newly the sun's warm glow to feel,
And, wearied with his toil he slept—
Small guerdon this for all his zeal!

Anon a tremor shook his frame,
He seemed in bulk to grow apace,
Behold! adown his corselet came
A rift that yawned a little space.

Then throe on throe each member shook,
Along his back the crevice grew;
Oh, wonder! while I breathless look,
From out his helm his head he drew.

His horny talons gripped the tree,
More and still more his frame increased;

Then, as if faint with agony,
Far backward fall'n, all motion ceased.

And while he hung in torpid sleep,
From either side there budded wings
So limp and tiny—mystery deep!
Oh, miracle of common things!

To gauzy pinions fast they grew,
Outstretching for the summer flight;
Resplendent shone their shimmering hue,
Made glorious by the sun's full light.

Then lightly from his mail he stepped,
Leaving a shadowy self behind;
Out on the branch Cicada crept
And flung himself upon the wind.

His dream come true, his love-song rings
Far down the grove, from pine to pine;
The murmurous air the marvel sings;
All hail, all praise, O Life Divine!

XXV

From mystic polar glaciers torn,
  Impelled by mighty currents deep,
Slow-drifting mountain-dreams are borne,
  Majestic in their onward sweep.
From night escaped, on crystal keel
  They seek a softer, sunnier clime;
So drifting, dream on till thou feel
  The summer-glow of endless time,
And melting in the ocean swell,
There bid thine ancient bonds farewell!

XXVI

I sought a lake among the peaceful hills
  Where fairy fleets of water-lilies grow;
Each argosy rich golden treasure fills,
  Around them perfume-laden breezes blow.

The lily-pads, all glistening emerald, float
  Around me, whispering softly as I go
Sweet, murmured messages against my boat
  To her for whom their dainty blossoms blow.

I plucked the swaying lilies, one by one,
Torn from deep moorings in the languid stream;
No more they rode at anchor in the sun,
Short snapped each dripping stem, as breaks a dream.

But one proud flower the queen of all did reign;
Its jealous stem refused to let it go;
I pulled—the mimic cable bore the strain
And weighed its anchor from the depths below.

This lily on her gentle breast shall lie —
Lo, the reluctant root has reached the light;
I started, wondering as it met my eye,
How from such foulness grew these petals bright!

Drifting, I felt the presence of the Power
That from corruption formed a child of light;
That from the blackness called this radiant flower,
Pure, golden-hearted, robed in spotless white.

XXVII

Within the egg, with deftly folded wing,
Slumbers the bird beneath the mother breast;

But when the brooding warmth has wakened it
From nothingness to life, his little heart
Throbs with a longing for new liberty;
Till, breaking through the frail, confining shell,
He sees the light, he feels the summer breeze,
New life is his, and soon, with wing outstretched,
He spurns the nest and through the upper air,
Joyful in freedom, revels in the sky.

XXVIII

Do you remember, Love, the day
We watched the birdling fly away,
That golden summer morn?

Five times the robins sought the vine
Whose wreaths around our window twine,
And built them there a home.

And there when all the rest had flown,
One little bird was left alone
And paused upon the verge.

The tiny nest's encircling rim
The world's horizon was to him,
Scarce had he peeped beyond.

But now he yearned for greater things,
He longed to try his growing wings,
Where had his brothers flown?

He crouched; he took new heart to dare;
Leaped quivering on the untried air
And sought an unknown world.

As forth he flew with timid grace,
A tree, with proud and glad embrace,
Caught him in open arms.

The dewy leaves, with one soft kiss,
A whisper breathed of higher bliss
And straightway—he was gone.

XXIX

Along the beach dead shells lie strewn, cast off
By creatures who outgrew their narrow homes,
Until at length, bursting their prison bars,
They gained a larger life and roamed the restless sea.

XXX

As once I strolled beside the sun-lit sea
I heard a happy, low-voiced melody,

1896

1896.

As if, amid the breakers' hiss and roar,
A babe were softly cooing on the shore:

" *The agèd ocean is my nurse,*
My swaddling-band, sea-grass ;
The bright waves wash me in their spray,
And kiss me as they pass.

" *The storm-song is my lullaby,*
I love old Ocean's voice ;
The flood-tides bring me dainty food,
And waking I rejoice.

" *Though but a tender, pearly shell,*
Safe to my rock I cling ;
The future hath no fears for me,
Sing, Ocean, surge and sing!"

XXX *a*

O Brother Quail,
I love thy tale
Of the ripening wheat—
When the meadows sweet,
And the summer-glow begin to fail.

Then thy mellow pipe
Singeth "Wheat's ripe!"
And my heart leaps up to the glad refrain,
And I live my boyhood over again;
When across my way,
With his cheery lay,
I heard Brother Quail
Sing the song of the flail,
And life was one long summer-day!

XXXI

Low hung the sky, and gray and chill,
The woodland missed the joyous glow
Of summer, faded long ago;
The moaning wind swept round the hill.

As each wild gust fled hurrying by,
Dead leaves like rainfall smote the ground,
And, rustling with regretful sound,
The trees made answer with a sigh.

My heart was heavy with the thought:
"Must we, too, shrivel in the blast

Of death, and perish at the last?—
Must life's fair promise come to naught?

"Are lives as fruitless as they seem?
The future but a vision fair
That, fading, leaves us to despair?
And is immortal hope a dream?"

Nay, cheer thee, heart, for even now
Where from the stem dead leaves are torn,
Lo, autumn buds of spring are born;
And Hope is writ on every bough.

Though wintry dirges round me wail,
I hear the swaying branches sing,
I hear faint murmurs of the spring;
These buds will wake and life prevail.

XXXII

Lo, the great earth itself with gradual change
Passes from year to year, from age to age,
Until, when time is ripe, some mighty throe
Rends the old order with upheavals vast,
With world-convulsions, with great cataclysms

That change the seas and continents, and bring
New order into light, with higher life!
Would God from the immeasurable past
Evolve this world, through cycles moving slow
To shape the plastic earth for man's brief stay —
Birth-cry, a few days' toil, a moan — would God
Have wrought for man so long, if this were all?

XXXIII

O Mother Earth, who dost our spirits clothe
In garments plucked from thy maternal breast
On which we hang, is there no word more clear
No speech more simple, more articulate
Than thine? We hear thy voices sweet and low,
And thy dumb creatures as they try to speak:
We see thy slumbering children wake again
As night retreats before advancing day:
We see drear winter's dead revive with spring,
When from the heavens life-giving sunbeams flow:
We see thy types ascending, step by step,
Where thou the story of thy life hast told,
In mystic fossil hieroglyphs inwrought
In adamantine rock, in furrows deep,
Carved by the mighty ice-plough slowly drawn

By thy resistless steeds. In our frail hearts
Hope climbs with native instinct ever higher,
Encouraged by thy smiles, hope vague and dim.
Yet art thou terrible when in thy rage
Thou breathest fire, and man — ah, what is he?
A drop of dew, a moth in the furnace-flame!
Panting thy bosom heaves, proud cities reel,
And frighted nations tremble at thine ire.
Thy cyclones desolate, thy lightings kill,
Thy gory monsters tear and thirst for blood.
Thy voice that once was sweet appalls; black night
O'ermasters day; stern winter conquers spring.
How doubtful are thy hints of life to come!
Thou hast no pity for the weak; thy smiles
Are for the masterful, for them alone.
Is there no heart the feeble to befriend,
No arm outstretched the perishing to save?
Shall I return at last to thine embrace
And in thy darkness rest again forever?
A voice within me, foreign to thy tongue,
Tells of a treasure that thou hast not shown.
Hast thou not hidden in thy bounteous breast
Somewhere, O Earth, a peerless Gem, whose ray
Thence shining forth, erelong, shall flood thy gloom,

With light supernal glowing, yea, whose flame
Shall blind the sun, and put his fires to shame?

XXXIV

See, in that rock-hewn garden sepulchre,
The Holy One of God, despised and slain,
With nail-torn hands and feet, and spear-pierced side,
His gentle brow by mocking thorns defaced;
See where He lies, obedient unto death.
Into that pallid face the glow of life
Begins to steal, while silent and in awe
The heavenly watchers stand. Now they with haste
Unwind the scented wrappings from His form
That fill the place with rich aromas rare,
Perfume of spicery and sweet spikenard's breath
Lingering since Love her alabastron broke,
And with her tresses wiped these tear-bathed feet.
And then, their joyful faces all aglow
Like flashing sunbeams, quickly by a touch
They roll away the stone with jarring shock,
As if an earthquake passed, and sitting there
Behold their Lord go forth, Death's Conqueror.

XXXIV *a*

They tell me that my Lord is dead,
That all He wrought and all He said
Is writ upon the hoary page,
Dim record of a distant age.
Why do they take my Lord away
And fill my soul with sore dismay?

The sweet companionship I sought
Is but the phantasm of my thought;
His whisper low, His Heavenward look
But wordings of an age-worn book;
This thrill of life, this touch of fire
Mere echoes of my soul's desire.

They tell me that my Lord is dead,
That all He wrought and all He said
Is writ upon the hoary page,
Dim record of a distant age —
And this is all that 's left to me,
Lone pilgrim to Eternity!

XXXV

Emancipator of the slaves of fear,
Arise victorious from the tomb.
Thou hast explored its caverns drear
And rent its veil of gloom.

From age to age Thy liberating voice
Death's myriad captives hath set free;
At Thy glad summons they rejoice
In immortality.

What kings and ancient prophets longed to see,
In noon-tide glory now appears
Unto the poor revealed by Thee,
Clear-shining through their tears.

The helpless in Thy bosom Thou dost bear,
The weary lean upon Thy heart;
From troubled souls Thou liftest care,
Thy peace Thou dost impart.

To pastures new Thou leadest day by day,
O Shepherd true, Thy flocks defend,
Lest evil seize us in the way
And wolves the weaklings rend.

Thy peerless word, sweet-voiced in every tongue,
Invites the sons of every clime;
Thought-Leader Thou, Earth's great among,
Ideal of all time.

The thoughts of men Thou leadest after Thee,
Thy Spirit moves upon the deep;
What cause doth spurn Thy majesty
Shall in oblivion sleep.

Thy form unseen, Thou livest evermore
With men — the heavens and earth are met—
Did Love Almighty e'er before
Such fellowship beget!

How shapes Thy hand the movements of mankind,
  Kingdoms like billows rise and fall;
How patient guides Thy master mind
  Where sin disfigures all,

Evolving slow the vast, harmonious whole,
  Member to member, part to part;
Mankind the body, Love the soul,
  Thou the life-giving Heart.

Love-driven and sorrowing, gentle Prince of Peace,
  Thou sendest forth the awakening sword;
How bleeds Thy heart till war shall cease —
  Grim servant of the Lord

That with deep, ruthless plough the soil doth tear
  To fit it for Thy precious seed,
Till West with East the harvest share,
  And both Thy bounty feed.

Angels of peace fly swift at Thy command,
War's desolations to make good,
And closer weave from land to land
New ties of brotherhood.

The seething ferment of the world's unrest
Is but the leaven hid by Thee,
Till from the turmoil, froth, and quest
Thou lead men pure and free.

World-Healer, Good Physician, wise and calm,
Though fierce our fevered pulses burn,
Outpour for us Thy soothing balm
Till we Thy quiet learn.

The Orient star that lit Thy lowly birth
E'en to the Occident shall shine again,
Till Thou refresh the waiting earth,
O Light and Life of men!

A thrill of coming blessing and accord
  Whispers to men the mystery;
The winds are heralding the Lord,
  All eyes are bent on Thee.

Thou drawest, All-searching Lodestone, evermore,
  With mighty sweep from pole to pole,
Increasing hosts from every shore,
  Thyself, Thy heart the goal.

But not from Earth alone shalt Thou have praise;
  Unnumbered worlds shall hear Thy call,
And high the swelling triumph raise
  Till Love has conquered all.

XXXVI

Hail Victor, First-born from the dead!
Open our eyes to see Thy radiant face;
Make us to feel Thy presence, know Thy grace,
  From glory unto glory led.

THE LORD IS RISEN.

"The Resurrection," by Johann Friedrich Overbeck.

Thou whom the grave could not retain,
Nor Roman guard, nor envious seal confine,
Break Thou our fetters with a touch divine,
Help us Thy liberty to gain.

Thou Lord and Brother of mankind,
The past, the present, and the times to be
With growing expectation look to Thee,
The world's Deliverer to find.

Bring to our darkened minds new light,
Diffuse Thy quickening radiance far and near;
Vanquish the might of sin, dispel our fear
And let Thy day o'erwhelm our night.

Wake our dull souls from drowsy sleep,
Let us not here be fully satisfied;
Help us to rise with Thee to worlds untried,
Lead Thou the way and near us keep!

XXXVII

What powers now vaguely felt with longing deep,
What tireless strength where now we sleep or faint,

What daring courage where our hearts now fail,
What joy of life and freedom shall be ours!
How shall our hands reach back in sympathy
To those still hampered by the weight of flesh;
How shall we run with eager, flying feet
To meet our loved ones on that radiant shore
And love's full rapture know for evermore!

XXXVIII

Wait, my Belovèd, wait,
Swiftly the changeful seasons fly;
I am coming, my Love, though late,
The hour is drawing nigh.

Wait, my Belovèd, wait,
Stray not too far through regions fair;
I am coming, my Love, though late,
And I must find thee there.

Wait, my Belovèd, wait,
I fear lest thou outgrow thy mate
And I should come too late, too late;
Wait, O Belovèd, wait.

XXXIX

Was it an answer to my cry,
Or but a zephyr floating by,
A whisper or a sigh ?

"*Love is not dead,*" *it seemed to say,*
"*Love never will be far away ;*
I too await that day.

"*Love will not go beyond its own ;*
The more of bliss I here have known,
The dearer hast thou grown.

"*Love is not dwarfed by upward flight,*
Nor dazzled by celestial light,
Nor lost in Heaven's delight.

"*Nay, when thou com'st to seek me, Dear,*
I thy first wondering cry will hear,
Belovèd, have no fear.

"*Nor height nor depth shall separate ;*
There is no coming home too late ;
Be patient, Love, and wait."

XL

From some commanding height that rears its crest
Above the mists and clouds of earth, down looking
Shall we not through that pure and tranquil air,
See all our half-forgotten journey spread
Below us like a landscape at our feet:
The joyous, bloom-clad hills, the sunny plains,
The quiet hamlet nestling in the shade,
The city murmuring low of strife and toil,
The mountains proudly lifting up their heads
Where fleecy clouds float softly up the steep
Whose sturdy front has many a storm defied;
The perilous descent, the dark ravine,
And, black with gloom, the terrible abyss;
Swift-flowing rivers flashing in the sun,
The lake with islands on its peaceful breast,
Foul, stagnant fens and pools, the dark morass,
And, bounding all, that great mysterious sea
Whose waters bare us to the shores of time?
Then shall the various paths by which we came
Wind with a meaning far more bright and clear
Than when we trod those once familiar ways.

Earl Hoverbeer 74

XLI

Did early hope
Dream of a gentler slope,
Tuneful with Spring's alluring roundelay,
And bright
With cloudless light
Poured on thy joyful way?
Ah, courage keep;
Press on and scale the steep
Till thou the last sharp, rugged crag shalt climb;
There shalt thou gain a view far more sublime,
And fairer seem thy track
When looking back!

XLII

Shall we not see life's mystery made plain,
As some fair pictured tapestry that seems
Upon its nether side, beneath the hand
Of him who weaves, naught but disordered threads
And colors in a wild confusion thrown;
While on the upper surface shine the forms
Of beauty, and the colors rich and rare
That had their birth deep in the master's mind,

There glowing ere they saw the light of day?—
Or like a painted vase, whose noble shape
Is overspread with pigments crude and dull,
That by their discord seem its form to mar,
Until the artist gives it to the fire
Whose fierce, relentless breath upon it pours,
Making the colors blossom in the flame,
Rich and resplendent in their harmony?
Shall we not be like some o'erweary child
From whose limp fingers slips the tedious task,
And, while it slumbers, Mother's gentle hands
Undo the stitches; all the tangled threads
In order lay, and when the child awakes
Its tears have changed to smiles, its troubles fled?

XLIII

Sleep, child of my love, Mother watches thy slumber,
No more shall his troubles her darling annoy;
The cares that distressed thee, so many in number,
Her hand will undo them, sleep sweetly, my boy.

O child of my love, that my fingers might ever
Thy troubles remove, and swift succor afford;

Or wilt thou, my hero, the tangled cords sever
That fain would thee bind, with one blow of thy sword?

Peace, child of my love, Mother watches thee sleeping,
She longs for thy waking, as night for the day;
Thy mother with singing her love-watch is keeping
While baby is smiling, in dreamland at play.

XLIV

How tenderly doth mother-love embrace
All creatures, yea, the very earth enfolding!
See gentle Night with softly soothing touch
Lulling her child to sweet forgetfulness
Where, bowing low, the assiduous Galaxy,
The All-Mother, broods the weary, slumberous Earth,
From rim to rim of the horizon bent,
All love — her flowing garments woven of stars.

XLV

What splendors on my soul will break
When I from death's chill night awake!

How will mine eyes endure the light
Streaming upon their dazèd sight ?

Whose touch will rouse me from my sleep ?
What form will o'er me vigil keep ?

And when I feel that presence near
Shall I not be o'ercome with fear ?

How shall I look upon that face
So full of majesty and grace ?

Or shall I cross the ghostly stream
Without a sleep, without a dream;
Untroubled by the strident gale,
Unconscious of the straining sail,
Unknowing drift from shore to shore,
Dim earth behind, sunrise before;
All unawares the voyage make
From life to life without a break ?

Ah, waiting Love will meet us there,
  And 'mid the glories of that land
  Will gently lead us by the hand
Until our eyes the light can bear.

XLVI

Soul, in thy Father's home the skies are fair,
There shalt thou breathe a pure, refreshing air,
Shalt bathe thy wounds in limpid morning light,
Rest, and forget the turmoil and the fight.

When thou art rested shalt thou then explore
A wonder-land of beauty, and adore
The Hand that leads thee, as each new surprise
Rises sublime on thy bewildered eyes.

How insubstantial now earth's fading dream,
How like reality these marvels seem!
So blind thou wast with strange perversity,
That thou the shadows only then couldst see!

No troubled night shall end the happy day;
No longer Right before the Wrong give way;
There love shall bear its fruit through endless time,
And life grow full and strong in that fair clime.

XLVII

What joy to know the great of centuries past,
Heroes and sages and the patriarchs old,

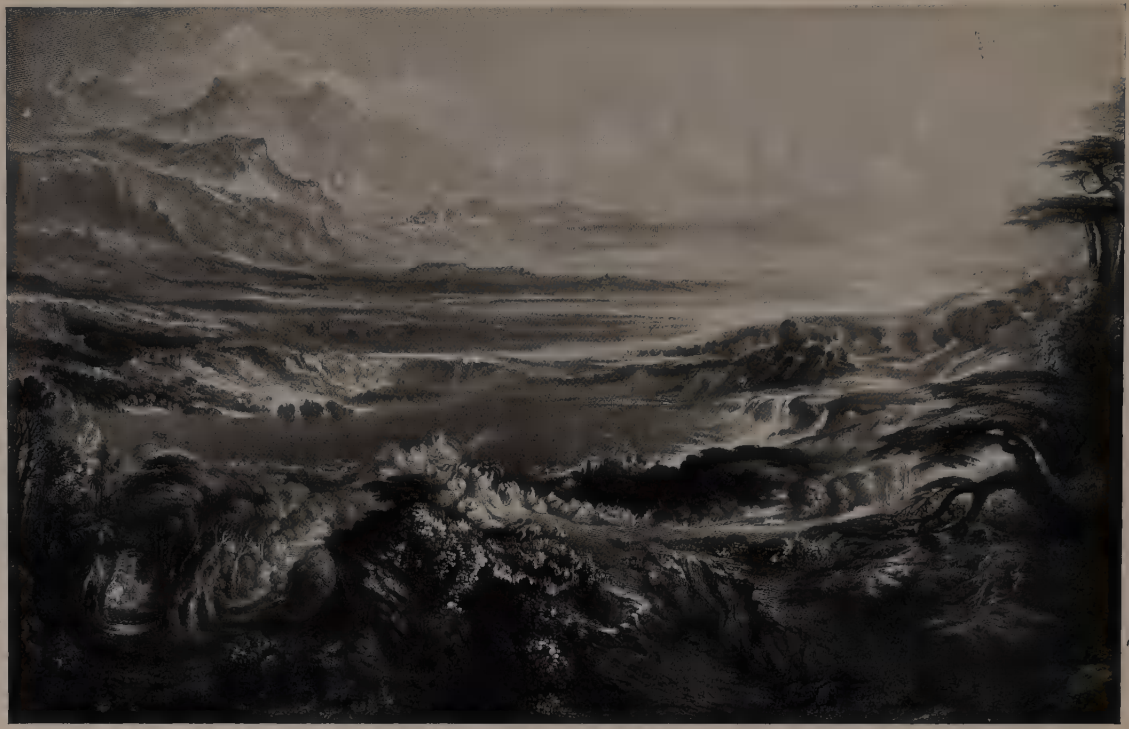
Leaders of men in every land and age,
Not bowed and hoary with unnumbered years,
But from earth's greatness to full stature grown,
Majestic now in manhood's glorious prime;
To sit at rest in that great company
With those we love, and drink deep draughts of lore
And wisdom from the masters of all time!

XLVIII

No more these warriors lead their fellow-men
To bleed for glory on the battle-field,
Nor devastate the earth to crown their pride;
For greater wars and larger conquests now,
With late-born zeal to serve their God and kind,
They marshal heavenly hosts to vanquish wrong
Where'er it lingers in the universe —
Life-healing blossom of noxious seed,
Strange fruitage of earth's strife for mastery

XLIX

And these who scoffed at Heaven and holy things,
Made light and mocked where angels look with awe,



Seeing how short their sight, how vast their loss—
Poor dazèd night-birds blinking at the day—
In deep humiliation own their shame.

L

No more these sages in their nightly watch
With feeble glass shall scan the starry vast,
To measure suns and count the glittering orbs;
No longer mocked and baffled by defeat,
With clearer vision they explore the sky
And read the secrets of the firmament.

LI

These dauntless souls who, loyal to their Lord,
Refused to bow the knee at Error's shrine,
Who scorned release at cost of truth betrayed,
Counting one man with God a greater host
Than armèd multitudes upholding wrong;
Unconquered by the rack, or flame's fierce breath,
The tiger's cruel fangs, the lion's fury,
Thought it but gain to die, so Truth might live;
Meekly the shame and agony endured,
As seeing Him who is invisible.

LII

Lovers of truth and man no more despair
Of right, or suffer cruel martyrdom;
The ebbing tide is out, and now the sea,
Turning in strength, sweeps all before its flood.

LIII

And these who in each soul, howe'er defiled,
Beheld a brother and a child of God;
Who loved their fellows well and strove to ease
The heavy burdens of their earthly lot;
To waken dead hearts to the thought sublime
That all are children of the Almighty One,
Immortal heirs of a great heritage —
These shall behold the glorious brotherhood
For which they longed and wrought, at last com
plete,
The universal family of God.

LIV

No more with patient toil these scholars trace
For men in dusty tomes the word of life,
And seek for light in ancient palimpsest,

Often with scorn and hatred as reward.
Now speak they with the Living Word, and learn
How simple is the truth, how plain the way ;
Himself the glorious Light for which they sought,
Himself the Way, the Truth, the Life of men.

LV

And these rapt lovers of the Heart of Things,
Who saw the grace of flowering field and vale,
The mystic shade of forests flecked with light,
The purple mist upon far distant hills,
The rush of seas, the storm's wild majesty;
Who felt the throbbing of a rhythmic pulse
And in the face of Nature saw her soul;
Who in her myriad voices heard one voice
That told them of her ancient mysteries;
Heard too in dreamy murmur of the breeze,
In bird song and the insect's drowsy note,
In sweet complainings of the wandering brook,
Melodious strains of nature's symphony;
Who saw the blush of dawn, the noon-tide pomp,
The stately splendor of declining day,
The melancholy twilight, and the spell
Cast o'er the sleeping earth by the pale moon,
Filling the charmèd air with floating forms

Drifting like fleecy clouds around the fair
Mistress of amorous Endymion,
Enamored of the peerless Queen of Night;
Who, when the moonbeams slept, with awe beheld
The midnight glory, the triumphal march
Of constellations through the star-lit waste;
Who strove in toil and want and cold neglect
To show a heedless world with brush, with pen,
With chisel, fragments of their visions fair,
And to interpret to their fellow-men
The deepest passions of the human heart —
These now are blest with clearer light, and know
The full fruition of their earthly dreams,
And loftier raptures of creative joy.

LVI

These others who, though lowly, still were true,
In meekness following where their feet were led,
Steadfast in duty, vast uncounted throng
That never knew how shining were their deeds,
Nor dreamed how fruitful was the seed they sowed,
Now sparkle, jewels in His treasury
Who doth with foolish things confound the wise,
And with weak things the mighty bring to naught.

LVII

Ah, not in slothful ease shall we recline
And dream away our new existence sweet;
The dream is past, and life, more life is ours!
With ever new desire shall we ascend
Those paths that climb o'er glorious heights to Him
Whose beckoning hand forever leads the way.
No dreary days of care, no nights of pain,
No swiftly flying years that drag us on
With cruel haste to meet the dreaded end —
The end is past and time shall be no more!
No more our little boats we daily launch
To creep in fear along our native shore,
But out upon the boundless ocean sail,
Free to explore the wonders of the deep.
Or sent as messengers of Love Divine,
Knights-errant to protect the weak from harm,
To aid the brave contending for the right
And from unequal odds wrest victory;
To turn a sinning brother from his sin
And help him forward on his homeward way —
What sights of beauty shall our eyes behold
As, in vast journeys through the unnumbered worlds,
We view the many mansions of the sky.

LVIII

It may be God hath some far-reaching plan
  Of life, some vast and wonderful design
  Embracing all creation, more benign
Than aught that ever charmed the heart of man;
    Ah, who can tell!
The seed that for a thousand years lay buried out
    of sight,
Till, 'mid a later race of men, it burst upon the
    light,
May hide within it energies hereafter to be told,
Attesting its Creator's might with marvels manifold:
The vine that buds and withers at my door
May bear its fragrant blossoms on a shore
  Where summer never fades:
The insect flitting through a single day
May murmur praises somewhere far away
  In ever verdant glades:
The little builder of the aërial arch
  With flying banneret and silken dome
  May in some future home
As the long ages march,
Growing in skill and understanding, build
More lasting temples with mute worship filled.
  Dumb creatures' eyes

That often look so wistfully at me
I, wondering, may hereafter see
Beneath celestial skies.
And every bird that greets the dawn,
Or seeks its food upon the dewy lawn,
Or wanders free and fearless in the height,
Or throws its melancholy plaint upon the night,
May in some cloudless country—who shall say?—
Rejoice in larger life, and sing alway
His praises, every creature chanting: All is well!
Yea, every beast at whose terrific voice the forests tremble
May, when the forces of Almighty Love at last assemble
With his full diapason swell the harmony of praise.

And every creature that is in the heavens
And on the earth and under it and such
As dwell within the sea, yea all therein,
I heard say: "Blessing, honor, glory, power
Be unto Him that sitteth on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and forever."

Methinks the tide of life that flows from God
Will strew no useless wreckage on the strand,

Nor leave a periwinkle perishing for food
In any inlet where it once hath poured its flood;
But rolling on with mighty surges vast —
Life sprung from God, too vital to be lost
In dark oblivion or to chaos tossed —
Will somehow bless all creatures at the last
Through evolutions infinitely grand.

Man craves for mystery: here is one indeed
As deep, as high, as boundless as his need;
Go ponder well before, with rule and line,
You take the measure of the Love Divine.

LIX

What forms now dimly seen, what symphonies
Of music unimaginably sweet,
In that glad life shall be our heritage!
Singing for joy, the little ones of earth,
Where once they lived a moment and were gone,
Like flocking birds a countless multitude—
Innumerable as the buds of spring—
In rosy clouds of cherub faces bright
Like mists of dawn aglow with coming day,
Fill all the happy heavens with ecstasy;

As larks a-wing, though hidden in the sky,
Pour forth their carols to the listening earth
And flood the air with waves of melody:

LX

Dew drops twinkling in the sun
Ere the day hath scarce begun,
In Thy golden light we shine,
Ever happy, ever Thine ;
In Thy hand, so safe and sure,
Hold Thy little jewels pure.

Thou from sin hast kept us free,
Lord, we raise our song to Thee :
Thou didst give us human birth,
And a moment on the earth,
That we might Thine image bear,
Children of Thy love and care.

Those whose love about us twined,
In whose hearts we were enshrined,
We will lead to realms above,
We will comfort with our love,
We will lead them home to Thee,
Home for all eternity.

LXI

Softly a summer breeze begins to blow
Through woodlands, faint with heat of sultry noon,
Each slumbering leaf awakening with a kiss.
A murmur of delight flows quickly on
Through whispering boughs, as stronger grows the wind,
And all the trees their swaying branches wave,
Till from the rocking forest, far and wide,
A swelling chorus rises to the sky.
So when some patient one, through stress and storm,
Enters that harbor of eternal rest,
Or when some weary prodigal returns
From sin, to seek again his Father's house;
Some ancient giant wrong on earth goes down
Before the overwhelming charge of right,
And the world moves a little nearer Heaven;
When, by the mandate of Creative Power,
Some orb, new-born and flaming in its course,
Speeds through the trackless heavens to do His will,
Or when the Lord of Hosts His spirit breathes
On the fierce passions of rebellious men
And leads them willing captives to the throne

Of Love Omnipotent—then from that vast
And thronging multitude shall one sweet voice
Utter a note of praise and victory;
And other voices, joining in the song,
Pass it from host to host, from world to world,
Until with grandeur, past all human thought,
The anthem rises in exultant strains,
And the melodious tide of music flows
Through glowing aisles and glittering arches high,
A lofty oratorio of praise.

LXII

What raptured chords like floating incense rise:
Hark how each home-returning host replies!
Now they relate how they have served our race,
And trophies lay before the Throne of Grace;
Now from the Lord of Life new powers receive
And hasten forth new triumphs to achieve.
Around the Throne like seas they ebb and flow,
Love's willing messengers they come and go,
Him serving whose Almighty Name they bear,
Eager with mortal men their joy to share.
Now with soft warblings, now with bird-like call,
Sweet cherubs carol songs antiphonal.

I hear them sing, faint echoes reach my ear;
Those tones I know, the words I cannot hear!

LXIII

What joy for us, with evil once oppressed,
With discord and the mystery of life
That o'er our earthly way dark shadows cast
And filled our hearts with ceaseless questioning,
Bathed on those heavenly heights in cloudless light
To watch God's purpose ripen, and to see
The strong and feeble come, the old and young,
The high and low of earth by many ways!

LXIV

These come in haste, as flies the eager dove
O'er land and sea, swift to her distant home,
Where safe from harm her nestlings lie in peace;
They saw the light celestial from afar
And pause not till they reach their journey's goal;
Chosen of God, elect to lead the way
Before the countless hosts that follow them,
Slow struggling out of darkness into light.

LXV

These grope in darkness with dull, blinded eyes
That cannot see the day that waits for them.

Till at the breaking of some heavenly dawn
With greater glory than the midday sun,
Flashes the light eternal on their night,
Through earthly films, like lightning in the gloom.

LXVI

These, footsore and with travel worn, retrace
Their wilful steps through rugged, thorny paths,
Scourged by the cruel scorpion-whips of sin—
Stern justice of inexorable Love—
Until they loathe the hateful thing that barred
The way and from their birthright shut them out;
And there repenting of their sin, turn back
In shame to drag their weary feet toward home,
Stript of the vain habiliments of earth,
Wherein they trusted once for place and power;
Least where ambition would have placed them
highest,
Starvelings though glutted with the husks of sin,
Stunted and shriveling in their nakedness,
Abashed and overwhelmed amid the throng
Of radiant beings, strong in life undying—
And in the front, lo, those their sin did hurt,
Their victims once, when on the earth they dwelt,

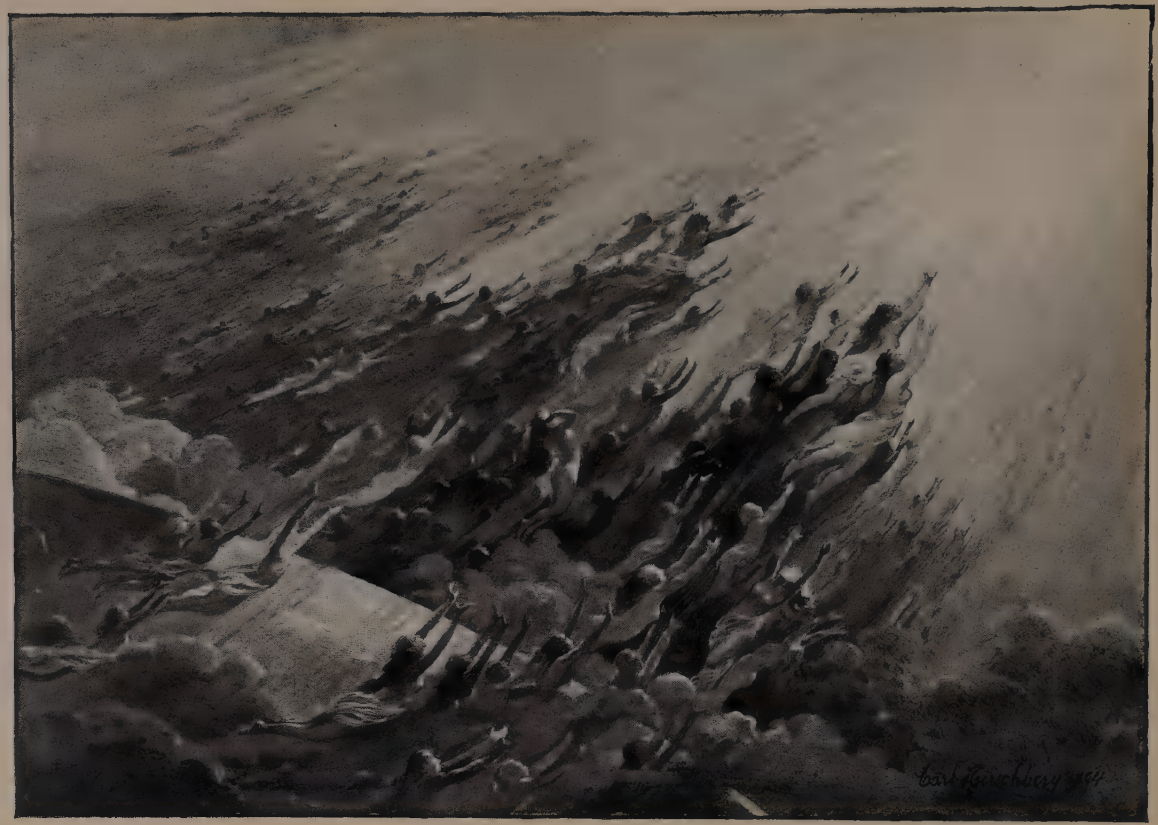
Come forth to welcome them and to forgive !—
Whose wondering eyes in pity on them turn ;
Whose whispered words of high encouragement
Long dormant manhood waken in their breasts;
Who haste to give them joy as fast they come,
Borne Heavenward on love's buoyant atmosphere;
Drawn by the Heart once pierced for them on earth —
Still pierced by human sin, till sin shall cease —
Drawn by that Love Divine they long did spurn,
Now kindling in their hearts its deathless passion.

LXVII

Behold this vast, innumerable host—
From fireside, field and war's dread carnage flowing—
A mighty flood of souls from every land,
Whose billows break upon the Heavenly strand !

LXVIII

Love is the Lord of Life, whose rhythmic breath
All nature animates, Sovereign of Death;
Like ocean billows proudly tossing high
Their foam-flecked manes against a stormy sky—



That, heaving, break, and falling at His feet,
Plash on the footstool of His mercy-seat—
He sees the generations toward Him roll
And knows the need of every human soul;
Lights worlds untold with mighty solar fires
And satisfies alone man's deep desires.

LXIX

No murky Styx, no poison river pours
Its deadly waters with pollution foul
Upon those blooming fields so bright and fair,
To desecrate the purity of Heaven.
The countless mingled waves of this vast stream,
Though borne in muddy torrents, or through black
And miry swampland, though on earth defiled
With many a stain and dark impurity,
Though dyed with blood and mixed with bitter tears,
Shall by the alchemy of that pure soil
Through which they flow upon their Heavenward
course,
And by the sunlight's clarifying power—
Life-giving sunlight of Almighty Love—
So like to crystal shine, that when they break
Upon celestial shores they shall make glad
With sounding praise the city of our God!

LXX

No little rivulet is this, confined
By narrow banks that fret its doubtful way;
All souls drift on the waters of this flood
Long as the course of time, wide as the world,
Deep as the heart's profound desire, the great
Home-coming of the human family.

LXXI

Blest city, fairer than a blissful dream,
Home of my love, my longing soul's desire,
In whose fair golden courts my loved ones wait,
Homesick, afar, thy joys I faintly see.
Fade not so soon from my enraptured sight;
Glow, crystal walls; with light ethereal glow!
Sparkle with precious gems, O ramparts high!
Ye mighty bulwarks and foundations, blaze
With sapphire, emerald, and amethyst!
Ye glorious gates of pearl, stand open wide
To welcome home the children of your King!
Ah, not till His last child has entered in—
The last, lone, weary soul from the dead earth—
Will God our Father bid you, portals fair,
Upon your golden hinges joyful swing;
To sin and sorrow shut, to night and death.

LXXII

And as I think upon that mystic flood,
Vast and resistless in its onward sweep,
Hid in the shadows of antiquity,
Flowing to ages yet unborn and dim,
Stretching beyond the reach of mortal eye,
My heart stands still in wonder at the sight,
Awed and subdued by its immensity.

LXXIII

O Christ, have our poor feeble minds conceived
A work too mighty for Thy saving power?
Have our fond hopes too great a burden laid
Upon Thy heart? Are universal peace
And concord sweet, evil destroyed, the right
Victorious, God everywhere enthroned
In willing hearts — are these some vision fair,
The fleeting glory of a night, to fade
When we awake to the reality?
Lord, do we touch the border of Thy robe?
Do we behold the outline of Thy plan?
Is this a foretaste of immortal bliss?
Or are we by some flitting light deceived;
Lured to perdition by a mocking dream?

LXXIV

Have we not read that Thou one day will sit
Upon Thy glorious Throne to judge the world,
All nations gathered in vast concourse there?
That Thou in dread assize wilt judgment pass?
That Thou the good and evil wilt divide,
As from his sheep the shepherd parts his goats?
That Thou the good to heavenly joys wilt call?
That all the wicked Thou wilt there condemn
To suffer never-ending punishment
And from Thy sight forever exiled be,
With demons cursed in everlasting fire?

LXXV

How have these words of fear from age to age,
Like some deep-tolling signal bell of doom,
Sounded hope's knell and ushered in despair,
By priestly craft enslaved the souls of men,
Sanctioned the torment of the rack and stake,
Made reason reel and totter from her throne,
Crushed bleeding hearts that mourned for loved
ones lost—
Lost if Thy love go not beyond the grave —
And with the bridal garments of Thy church
Mixed the habiliments of hopeless woe!

LXXVI

When from the language of the Orient,
So warm with symbol and hyperbole,
Thy words to our cold, Western speech are brought,
How oft do men their better meaning miss,
To dogma freeze Thy glowing imagery!

LXXVII

How many souls indignant at this tale
Of Heaven's injustice, spurn the proffered bliss
And turn away in loathing from a God
Called Love, called Light, clothed with almighty
power,
Who in the name of justice could inflict
Upon His children, sinful though they be,
Torment and cruel agony, such as they
On their worst enemy would scorn to lay.

LXXVIII

Men in their hearts despise this Mighty One,
Powerless to guide the souls that He has made.
How many brave, unselfish ones have grieved

For those they loved through sin and shame, though dead
In unrepented sin, and without hope,
With broken hearts, have longed to go to them,
Careless of Heaven, if they might share their fate —
So noble and so strong is human love.

LXXIX

How long, how long shall Terror sit enthroned,
With iron heel to crush the hearts of men
And rule the world by fear, where Love should reign ?
O Christ, forgive the wrong that we have done,
The cruel words that we have made Thee speak.

LXXX

Didst Thou not rather say that ere the last
Of those that heard Thy words should taste of death,
Jerusalem the Holy, recreant
Unto the Lord, her King, should meet her doom
In such o'erwhelming sorrow that the sun

And moon should veil their faces at the sight,
The pitying skies drop stars upon the earth
As tears, in sympathy with Zion's woe,
And all the powers of heaven should shaken be,
In consternation at her overthrow;
That then the Chosen People of the Lord
Should see the ancient order pass away
And desolation stalk throughout their land;
That Thou among all nations of the earth
Wouldst then Thy kingdom found on LOVE TO MAN
And deeds of love should supersede the Law;
That service to Thy brethren Thou wouldst take
As service done unto Thyself; that they
Who on the weak and helpless took no pity
Should go henceforth, not to unending woe—
Else wert Thou casting off who need Thee most—
But, self-cursed by their selfishness and sin,
Suffer æonial, purifying fires
Within the soul where'er the soul may be—
All else stript off, soul face to face with God—
Suffer a just, reforming chastisement,
Æonial pruning, sharply cutting off
Their dead and withered branches, till they bear
Fruit for Thy garner, pleasing in Thy sight;
That 'neath Thy rule this law unchanged should be;

That now and evermore at this tribunal
Nations and men for judgment must appear
By Thy criterion of Love to Man?
Lo, they who know not love know not yet God:
For God is love, and this is life eternal:
God and His Son to know, whom He hath sent,
Not knowing whom is death, eternal death.
Thy judgments are eternal, timeless, lift
Clean out of space, above all circumstance.
Ah, what is space that it should hem Thee in?
Or what is time that it should limit Thee?
For space is naught but a star-dusty scroll,
And fleeting time a brief and broken line
In Thy grand epic of eternity.

LXXXI

Thou Patient One, how must Thou grieve to see
The slow, hard heart of man obscure Thy light
As doth the moon, with narrow, darkling orb,
Eclipse the sun's resplendent face at noon!

LXXXII

O gentle Shepherd, Thou didst tell of one
Who sought his wilful, straying sheep afar
Until he found it in the wilderness.

He did not seek awhile till night came on
And the dark river lay across his path,
And there turn back and leave his sheep to die,
Torn by the wolves upon the mountain-side.
Not so short-lived and fickle was his love;
He sought until he found, and laying then
His sheep upon his shoulders, homeward turned
And to his flock and fold rejoicing came.
Lord, in that Shepherd Thou Thyself didst show;
No cry of pain unheeded smites Thine ear,
No dusky river bounds Thy searching love;
Thou art not Saviour on the earth and then
When Death is past, a stern, relentless Judge.
We trust Thy never-ending love, the same
From ancient days till now, from now till Thou
At last Thy flock complete to God shalt bring;
Thy flock ingathered from a thousand hills
Of Earth, and from the shining plains of Heaven;
Yea, from the abode of terror and despair;
From east, from west, from height, from depth they
come,
One flock, one Shepherd, one rejoicing fold,
All wanderers found, all foes by Thee subdued,
Subdued by love, not fear, All-Conquering One,
Lord of the living and the dead!

LXXXIII

O Christ,
If God is Love and Light and if in Him
No darkness is, then love and light should lead,
And following these shall I not find the truth ?

LXXXIV

Thou didst call God our Father, whose great heart
Burning with love for the rash prodigal,
His lost and wayward son, could not await
His coming, but with eager haste ran forth,
As from afar He saw him nearing home,
Weary of sin; and falling on his neck,
Rejoiced that He had found His child again.
Thou didst call God our Father, Thou didst show
This Pole Star set to guide us in the night,
And any path that leads not toward that Star
Leads not to truth, but to some evil snare
Of man's device, or to some precipice.

LXXXV

Our Father! When the Son of God went forth
To war upon the oppressions of the world,

To break the power of tyrants, and to storm
The strongholds of a thousand ancient wrongs
Entrenched in hoary rite and privilege,
He girt no flaming sword upon His thigh,
Nor at each giant evil hurled defiance,
Nor let His legions loose upon the foe.
Ah no! Apparelled in simplicity,
He went as David ran with pebbles taken
From out the brook to slay Philistia's pride.
A simple thought He planted deep, as seed,
Sown in the fertile soil of human hearts,
There long to germinate until the thought
Grew up among the nations worn with strife—
Grew as the mighty banyan grows, from root
To root, far-spreading, weary Earth to shield,
Sun-beat and torn by tempest—that if God
Our Father were, then brothers all mankind.
This germ, so simple, so sublime, hath wrought
As leaven in the world; now one by one,
Oppressions totter, smitten unto death.
Aghast before its simple majesty
Despots in armed alliance watch askance
Their dreaded foe, as conquering on it comes.
"Our Father," breathed upon a myriad lips
In aspiration for a better day,

Shall mighty throes of revolution heave
And empires overturn and overturn.
"Our Father"! wonder-working talisman
Before whose charm the peoples are transformed;
Hail, corner-stone of human brotherhood!
Hail, sacred charter of man's liberty,
Thou pledge and prophecy of coming good,
Forerunner of a world-democracy,
Led by the aristocracy of love,
Whose royal title deed to rank is service!
Hail, mercy's gentle angel earthward flown,
Sweet almoner of Heavenly Charity,
Angel of Help, thy tender ministries
The poor shall succor and the suffering heal;
Blest thought of home, thy cheering fireside glow
Doth melt the hardened heart and soothe the soul.

LXXXVI

Though man forget from whence he came,
Or with neglect his birthright scorn,
He cannot change his rank or name,
For he a child of God was born;
Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth

Though satisfied with low delight,
Unmindful of the heavenly day
That streams in vain upon his sight
To glorify his earthly way,
Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

Though he, with base ingratitude
Love's care and mercy should despise,
That Love which raiment gives, and food,
And with earth's beauty feasts his eyes,
Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

Though on the Lord he turn his back
And spurn the love that for him waits,
Though he Love's messenger attack
And drive with insult from his gates,
Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

Though poor and needy be his lot,
Though troubles thicken day by day,
Though by his fellow-men forgot,
Though care and hardship crowd his way,

Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth

Though peace and joy of life be gone,
Though brought by sin to mortal pain,
The far-off goal shall yet be won,
The truth unchanged will yet remain;
Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

He comes, no suppliant begging bread,
Nor craves he grace of nobler hands,
Erect he holds his kingly head,
Heir of all ages and all lands;
Of royal lineage he, and princely birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

Naught, naught the mighty bond can break
That binds the Father to His child,
Nor Death nor Hell His purpose shake,
Though vast their storm and wreckage wild;
Man is of royal lineage and birth:
His Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

The Lord of Life, who brought him forth,
Undaunted by the sin of man,

Ingratitude and folly's froth,
In triumph vast fulfils His plan;
We are of royal lineage and birth,
Sons of the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth.

LXXXVII

How art thou satisfied with husks and swine,
Thou scion of a royal house divine?
Why dost thou linger in the wilderness,
Self-exiled from thy home, in sore distress?
Dost thou not long for thine ancestral halls,
Where love illuminates the glowing walls,
Where treasure past thy wildest dream is stored
And lavish plenty piles the groaning board?
Dost thou not long to leave thy low estate
For nobler joys that on thy coming wait;
To smell the subtile perfume of the air
Blown from the gardens round that homestead fair;
To hear æolian whispers breathing low,
Calling to mind loved sounds of long ago;
To see that home unchanged from age to age,
Guarding secure thine ancient heritage;
To feel the bounding pulse of manhood leap
Through all thy veins, so long in sin asleep,

And have the robe of honor round thee thrown,
Clothed with thy Father's glory as thine own ?
Dost thou not long to feel the old embrace
And see love's pity in thy Father's face,
The while those long-expectant gates resound
With ringing welcome for the lost one found ?
Shake off thy lethargy, immortal soul,
Thy Father waits to bless and make thee whole.

LXXXVIII

Once did my father's strong and tender hand
Nurse me through sickness back from death's dark
strand,
Back from the chilly waters called my soul,
And by his care and watching made me whole.
Some day a Father's voice will call me home,
Home from this land of shadows bid me come,
Back from earth's fitful dream and death's alarm,
Led and protected by His mighty arm—
Wake me to life, glad strength no more to lack,
With all my ailments cast behind my back.

LXXXIX

But we have read of that dread sin, that no
Forgiveness hath in this world or the world

To come. Has not this horror drawn a cloud
Across the sun for many a saddened soul,
Anxious lest he at last should meet this doom?
How oft has reason staggered 'neath the load!
What gentle hearts in hopeless death have sunk,
Hunted by this grim spectre to the grave!
How many mock who fain would love the Lord
Could He forgive unto the uttermost,
Were His love greater than our greatest sin.
How many generous minds would never bow
Before a God who could refuse to grant
Forgiveness to an humble suppliant!

XC

Have thou no part nor lot in such a thought
My soul! believe it not, consent thou not
Thus to malign the Saviour's spotless name.
Upon Almighty God cast no such slur
Born of old error, of mistaken zeal,
Or of some impious conspiracy,
To forge, with this dread thought, the fetters strong
That for long ages bound the minds of men
Imprisoned by a priestly tyranny.

XCI

What phrase is this that holds us thus enthralled —
In this world or the next? This world, forsooth!
And wherefore read we not in place of world,
A lifetime, generation, or a space;
A dispensation, era, period,
An age? Why should all these rejected be,
That would comport with God's high character
And leave us hope for ages yet to come,
When that past time and this in which we live
Have gone, and in the long eternity—
Æons of æons, cycles all unknown,
Duration vast, unwasting, yet to come—
Forgiveness might be found for every sin?
Has Christ not told us that the letter kills
And that the spirit only giveth life?
What earnest aspirations after God,
What high and holy thoughts, what pure desires
Has letter-worship strangled at the birth,
Relentless, pitiless, implacable!

XCII

How have we stumbled at these fearful words
From Him who bade us love our enemies,

That like our Heavenly Father we might be;—
Who on the unjust and the just alike
The blessing of His rain bestows; who makes
His great, life-giving sun to rise and shine
Reviving both the evil and the good —
Bade us forgive our brother though he sin
Against us many times oft multiplied,
And on the cross forgave His murderers!

XCIII

Nay, Thou didst utter hot, indignant words,
The terrors of Thy wrath, O Lamb of God,
'Gainst them who would the Holy Spirit quench
Wherever it might move the hearts of men
With comfort for their sorrow; or might give
Fresh courage to Thy followers who faint
In their long, valiant warfare upon sin;
Or, through the gathering darkness might break
forth
In flashes of new light from that clear day
That streams forever round the Throne of God—
Whether in time long past, when Thou didst walk
On earth, or when with noiseless footsteps or
With clash of battle's wild commotion, Thou—
Forever sowing seed for times to come,

Forever leading men to light and life—
Hast led the nations after Thee, along
The solemn, storm-swept, sun-flecked colonnade
Of centuries that leads to our late age.

XCIV

How fierce the righteous wrath of love! Behold
The father sternly force his wilful son
From suicidal crime; the mother stand
Between her child and shame with flashing eyes
And eloquence of wrath; nay, the wild beast
Love's fury knows, when she defends her young!

XCV

No sterner, fiercer words, O Christ, e'er fell
On mortal ear than when Thou didst arraign
The foes of truth, who would the Spirit quench
And hinder those who sought its voice to hear.
Then Thou, like fiery rain, upon their heads
The maledictions of Thy wrath didst pour;
The fierce, relentless wrath of love, not hate,
Wrath in defence of trusting ones shut out
Hurl'dst Thou on keepers of the door of Truth
Who closed it on meek faces entering;

Wrath of upbraiding sorrow for the fate
Of faithless stewards courting dire distress,
Æonial grief ere they from sin should turn—
Needless, would they but hear Thy voice and live.

XCVI

Though men blaspheme the God who speaks to them
By all of nature's faithful ministries,
By all the holy prophets of His word;
Though men revile the blessèd Son of Man,
Yet may they be forgiven in this age:
But when a man blasphemes the God within,
That dove-like broods upon the dormant soul—
O Paraclete, Companion, Comforter!—
To waken it to loftier, nobler life,
How hardly, in this age or that to come
Shall he forgiveness find for this dread sin!

XCVII

The man who conscience stifles, who calls right
That which he knows is wrong; who knows the good,
Yet says to Evil, "Thou shalt be my good,"

That man the intimacy of his God
Has violated, and with insult scorned
The bosom Friend who pleads with him in vain;
Who still with silent footstep follows him
To whisper in his ear at busy noon,
In unexpected places call his name,
To look upon him, from the star-lit sky
With deep, clear-shining eyes that pierce his soul;
His sleep to startle with strange, troubled dreams
That will not fade, but glimmer through the day;
Besetting day by day, before, behind,
To visit him with pain, remorse and woe
In this life, in the life to come, unquenched
While sin remains to feed the flame; till he
Somewhere shall meet Him face to face, and there
Drawn by the love that would not let him go,
Conquered by faithful Love—love stern but true—
Unto his Father turn a penitent.

XCVIII

O Christ, defend us all in this our day,
From such dark sin; let us not dare to call
Thee servant of Beelzebub; to quench
The Spirit, though it choose some lowly voice,
Some unknown follower of the Living God

To prophesy new truth—so old, yet new—
And from Thy royal treasury bring forth
Thy precious jewels to enrich mankind;
To show Thy grace more high, more deep, more
vast
Than man-made creeds and systems would allow.

XCIX

Thou art Incarnate Love, and when that Love
Has purged with fierce, long-lasting penal fires
The dross from the pure gold in these gross hearts,
God will, through untold ages yet to come,
Show the exceeding riches of His grace
In kindness toward us through Thy saving name.
It is our sin God would destroy, not us;
All we His children are, and unto Him
Do mercies and forgivenesses belong;
For Love—our God—is a consuming fire,
Consuming human guilt, not living souls.

C

To every cold or troubled heart
The treasures of Thy love impart;

Thy pity for each human woe,
Lead us our brother-love to show;
Beneath Thy rule, O Prince of Peace,
May strife and sin and sorrow cease.

Hasten the coming of the time
When love shall lead in every clime;
That long-expected, longed-for day
When all shall own Thy gentle sway,
Thy kingdom spread from sea to sea,
Thy praises fill eternity.

CI

Didst Thou not also say: "I am the Door"?
Again Thou saidst: "If any man shall knock,
It shall be opened unto him." And didst
Thou mean that for this little span of life
Thou wouldst receive the weary to Thy home,
And those who seek for rest and peace with Thee,
But that when death is past, and those blind eyes
That could not see on earth Thy loveliness,
Or, dazzled by some fleeting joy, refused
Thy hospitality—ah, didst Thou mean

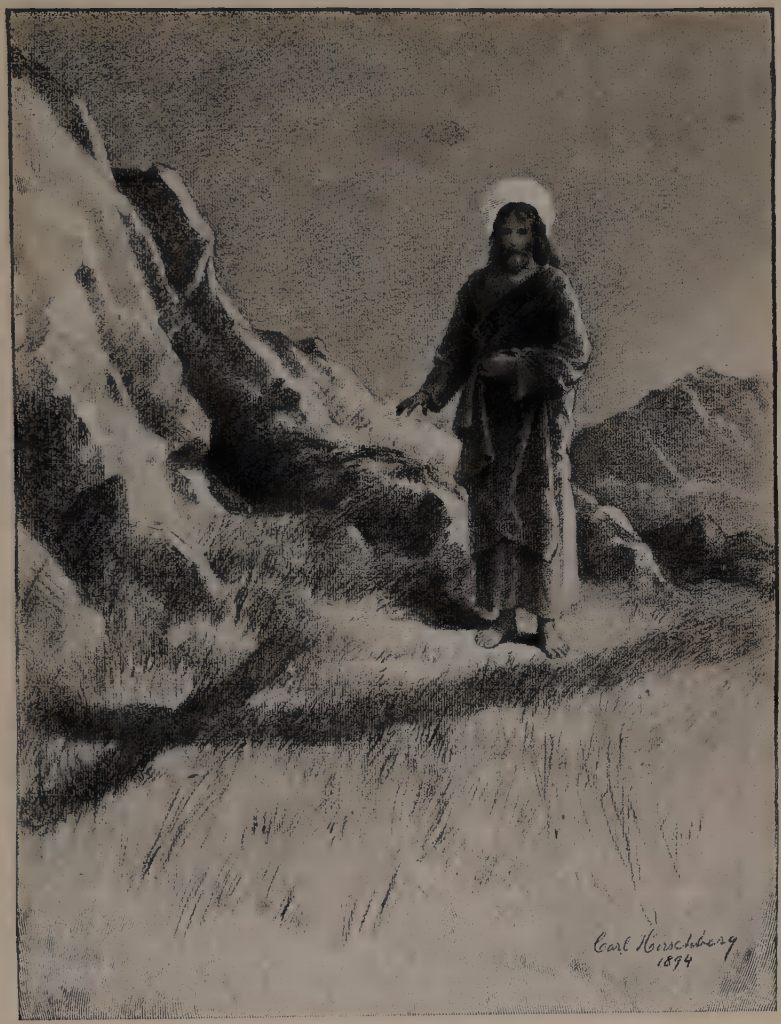
That when they turned again to seek Thy love
(Perhaps in some far distant time and world),
Repenting of their sin and wasted years,
And humbly knocked for entrance to Thy home,
Then Thou wouldst shut the door upon their cry
And let them wander in their misery,
Cursing Thy name throughout unending time?
Lord, Thou didst set no bounds. Thou didst not say,
"Till death," else wouldst Thou be the vanquished one
And Death would triumph over Thee! Nay, Lord,
Forgive the thought; Thou art Thyself the Door—
No fortress gate whose slow, reluctant hinge
Begrudges entrance to lost refugees:
This door admits us to our Father's house,
To each faint knock wide open is it thrown,
And, from within, forth streams the light of Home.
For whosoever unto Thee doth come
Thou wilt, O Christ, in no wise cast him out,
Nor time nor place may quench Thy boundless love,
But with those arms that were extended wide
Upon the bitter cross for all mankind
Thou wilt embrace and draw him to Thy heart.

CII

But canst Thou draw men thus? How slow our
hearts
To trust Thy patient love, Thy boundless grace,
That with unwearied patience waits for all!
When Thou didst see the dreaded cross loom up
And throw its shadow on Thy lonely path,
Thou, the far distant future then beholding,
Madest a promise great and wonderful,
Pregnant with blessing vast for humankind —
That if Thou shouldst be lifted up above
The earth in mortal agony, Thou wouldst
Draw all men unto Thee. Thy word we trust.
How great that word, how comforting the thought!
Give us strong faith till Thou Thy word fulfil.

CIII

I did not ask for life. By God's decree
Helpless I came athwart the light of day.
My lot already cast, my wish ignored,
I had no voice to say if I would be.
Would He who forced my being on me leave
My unknown future, my eternal fate


Carl Hirschberg
1894

In these weak hands? Would He bid me decide
My course, and at some parting of the ways
Make final choice, with feeble sight and will,
Which way I go? Has He who hides from me
The morrow till it come, left me to plan
My journey through unending time, while yet
I, purblind, grope for light in this crude state?
Enough for me to follow day by day
With trustful heart in the plain path of duty,
Sure that the end is safe in God's strong hand.
Man may obey his Maker, or defy
Awhile the One that bore and nourished him,
But not a hairbreadth will Almighty Love
Concede to aught that would His ends confuse.
Sin unto each full recompense will bring
Of misery and pain—Tartarean fires
Deep burning in the soul—to drive us back
Into the homeward path. How oft, how far
We stray, how long sin's torments we endure
That lies with us. The end man cannot change —
For, saith the Lord: I am the First and Last
I the beginning am, and I the end,
The Alpha and the Omega.

CIV

Alas,
Sin may deceive and we afar may stray,
Our evil hearts our Maker may defy,
And Retribution, with her face of steel
And form of terror girt with consternation,
Our steps may follow with majestic mien,
Point out our rugged way with fiery sword,
Relentless, scourge us on to keen remorse,
And terrible may be our agony
Until with bleeding feet we reach the goal.
Then with a clearer vision shall we see
Stern Retribution, her long warfare over,
Loosen her corselet, doff her visor grim,
Lay from her dreadful form the clanking mail
And show her face—the radiant face of Love.
For love at last must triumph over all,
Nor sin nor death from God's firm hand may snatch
His offspring, for whose sake He made the worlds.

CV

Would God our Father wake us from our sleep—
The deep and dreamless sleep of nothingness—

To offer us a slender, mocking chance ?
Would He have called His children into life,
Vast throng of souls, unnumbered and unknown,
Through untold ages, in far sundered lands
Where they in darkness sat, nor knew His name,
Think you that He would call them forth for this ?
Is His free gift—our glorious heritage—
The sport of chance and coupled with a snare ?
Is Chance co-partner with the Lord of Hosts ?
Shall circumstance of birth, or time, or place,
Defeat His will and spoil our destiny ?

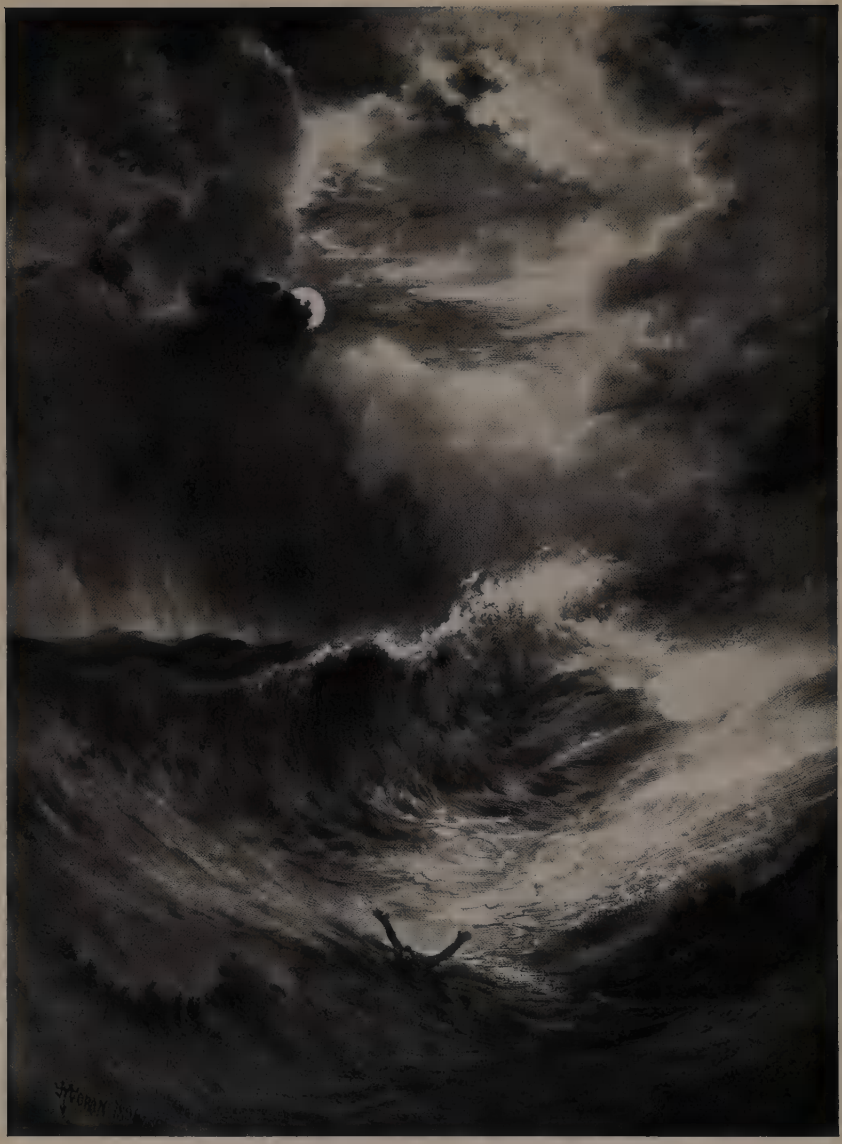
CVI

Would God our Father scatter living souls
Like seeds that flutter in the aimless blast
That recks not where they fall—in fertile soil
To live, or on the arid sands to die ?
Lost seeds may feed the hungry fowl, but God
Will glut no ravenous Moloch with the seed
Of His immortal being, nor cast forth
His offspring, careless where they drift or fall.
Should our Almighty Parent treat us so,
How Evil, insolent with growing power,
Would lift his taunting voice and God deride.

How blighting Chaos his lost sway would claim!
How Order back to wild confusion fly!
O Love, thou blushest at the unworthy thought;
O Darkness, what a triumph over Day!
O Justice, what a libel on thy name!
Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

CVII

Whither upon this strange and changeful sea—
Now calm, now joyful, sparkling in the sun
As if a million diamonds rained from heaven,
Now dark with gathering clouds, now swept by storm—
Drifts my frail bark, beset with doubts and fears?
I cannot clearly see, the night comes on,
The hoarse gale blows its bellowing trumpets wild,
And like a shroud the dread mist wraps me in.
I fear the night, I hear the breakers grind
Upon the cruel, threatening rocks. But still
To guide me on my way, to quell my fear,
From the far shores, with oft-repeated tones,
I hear a steady signal blowing loud
Through the thick night, above the tempest's roar,
With clarion voice proclaiming: God is Love.



In vain the angry winds that voice defy,
In vain their tumult would His signal drown,
In vain the murky fog would smother it;
Through all the storm, through all the doubt and
gloom,
I hear the broken echoes answer: Love!

CVIII

If any single soul shall drift in woe,
By fear, tempestuous and eternal, driven,
Lost on a shoreless sea in endless storm,
Or hopeless sink, engulfed in the abyss—
No floating spar, no hand outstretched to save
From the unpitying water's awful swirl—
Plunged headlong down to everlasting night,
In darkness quenched, a living soul destroyed,
Will not God's thought for it have been in vain,
His ancient promises be unfulfilled,
The triumph of the Cross be incomplete,
And victory be mingled with defeat?

CIX

Ah, never sank a sinning soul so low,
But God's paternal hand could deeper go
His perishing child to save.

Though shipwrecked by sin's overwhelming weight,
God's hand has rescued from as hard a fate
Some other castaway.

How shall I set a limit to His grace,
How dare I cloud the glory of His face?—

Abide His time; have faith through weary days
That at the last each soul shall sing His praise
Who moulds the hearts of men.

CX

Oft have I heard, upon the night-wind borne,
A mellow-throated robin piping low
As if, lone herald of the distant morn,
His little heart with rapture were aglow.

Some secret influence of the coming day
Had waked him from his leaf-embowered sleep,
Till in the rushing torrent of his lay
Outpoured the joy no night could silent keep.

O happy warbler, whose glad matins raise
Such tuneful worship to thine Unknown Friend,
I too would laud His name and sing His praise
And magnify His mercy without end.

For I have seen the breaking of a light
  More fair than ever rose to greet thine eyes,
Whose coming shall forever banish night
  And fill with joy the waiting earth and skies.

I see afar the glowing wheels of light,
I hear the fleeing spirits of the night —
  Would that my voice might flow as clear, as strong,
  As hope-inspiring as the robin-song.

CXI

If man can tame the fierce and ruthless beast
Filled with wild passion and the lust for blood;
If in that shaggy breast man can implant
A germ of love for one who gives him food,
Cannot the Lord in man's rebellious heart
Kindle a spark, in some forgotten cell
Of His own temple, ruined and unused,
That smouldering long, perchance unfelt, unseen,
With stench of smoke, or faint uncertain glow
Shall burst at last to flame in the dark night,
Fanned into life by some strong wind of Heaven,
And blazing, signal from its far-off hill
An answer to His beacon-light of love?

CXII

If man can find a way to reach the dark
Imprisoned mind, when every sense is dead
(Deaf ears and sightless eyes, nor any speech)
And light and comfort to the prisoner bring,
Cannot the Lord arouse the dormant Soul,
Though buried in a dungeon black as night;
Cannot a ray of His pure light steal in
To wake the sleeper and dispel the gloom ?

CXIII

If when the tree is withered, parched, and dead,
Refreshing rains can wake in the deep root
New life that shoots from darkness to the day,
With verdure glad, and bright with blossoms fair,
Cannot the Lord, with all His gracious showers
Of living waters, reach dead, sterile souls
Long heedless of His love, and make them feel
The breathing of His Spirit like the Spring,
And bud and bloom, with precious fruit, to grace
Celestial gardens of the King of Kings ?

CXIV

All souls are Thine, Thou holdest each essential ;
Art Thou then God, and canst not claim Thine own !
Thou madest day and night, sunshine and storm;

Thou madest Peace and hast created Evil;
Thou comprehendest and controllest all.
Cannot Thy perfect wisdom find a way
Hard hearts to reach and stubborn wills to lead?
Cannot Omnipotence the way make plain,
Justice and Might and Wisdom serving Love?
For these, though lordly, be but servitors
That Love Divine upon His sapphire throne—
Each in his own concentric region vast—
With triple zones of glory, girdle round.

CXIV *a*

When Thou, Almighty Love—dwelling alone,
Creation uncreate in Thee contained—
Didst gaze adown Duration infinite,
Years were not then, nor Time; the cycles fled
But as pulsations of Thy brooding thought—
The Eternal Father waiting for His child.
Yearning for offspring and companionship
"Let us make man," Thou saidst, "in our own image,
Godlike on earth to rule; but man must be
A meet companion, sharer of my thought,
Freeborn. Though destined to be one with me,
Through evil mastered and through Conquering Love

Must he ascend, till he attain my side—
There is no other way to this high Goal."

Then pressed upon the sorrowing Heart of Love
The burden of all time—the plaint and cry
Of Nature's ravening creatures, human woes:
Yea, all the tears of men, from Eden lost
To the dying moan of Earth's last denizen,
Dull heart-break, pestilence, fear, deep agonies,
Sin's blight and woe on all the world to be—
All didst Thou see, and on Thy heart didst bear,
And all the travail of Thy soul foreknow.
Yet for the splendor of Love's consummation,
To lead Thy child—Mankind—through life's hard school,
To walk for aye with Thee victorious,
Clothed with the greater joy Thou hast prepared—
Thou, travailing with our woes, didst say: "Let us make man!"

CXV

O Thou that from eternity
Upon thy wounded heart hast borne
Each pang and cry of misery
Wherewith our human hearts are torn,

Thy love upon the grievous cross
Doth glow, the beacon-light of time,
Forever sharing pain and loss
With every man, in every clime.

How vast, how vast Thy sacrifice,
As ages come, as ages go,
Still waiting, till it shall suffice
To draw the last cold heart and slow!

CXVI

Why should we doubt Thy power? Shall the unseen
And silent current that pervades the earth
Draw the frail needle trembling in the storm
Where shipwreck threatens on tumultuous seas,
Where bold explorers thread the forest gloom —
Shall this mysterious influence surely draw
The needle to the pole, until it point
Steadfast and true and shall we doubt Thy power
To attract the heart of man unto Thyself?

CXVII

Shall the majestic sun that rules the heavens
Hold in his grasp the planets as they roll
In solemn order through the realms of light;
Send forth his mighty forces and turn back

The flaming comet in his headlong flight,
Back from the awful depths of space unknown
The blazing fugitive recall, and make
This wonder of the skies obedient come ?
Shall suns and systems scattered far and wide
Throughout lone regions measureless to thought,
Worlds new-born, nebulous, in vapor swathed,
Fierce molten globes with fiery cyclones torn,
Rock-ribbed and sea-girt planets whirling by,
Dead worlds, dark phantoms of the firmament,
In ceaseless march and wheel and countermarch
Through the thick-woven orbit-maze of space—
Stupendous rhythm that marks the eternal year
With seed and blossom, fruitage and decay—
While each its pathway keeps, its course fulfils,
Nor clashing worlds in dread collision shake
The universe with terror and dismay;
Shall these harmonious orbs roll on in peace,
Obedient to the all-persuasive power
Of far Alcyone, great central sun,
Leading these hosts forever, on and on
We know not whither, and we know not how;
And shall not He who rules the universe
Thronèd in calm unmarred by discord dire—
Who out of chaos and primeval night—
When all the morning stars together sang—

Carl Bloch

Summoned these shining spheres to illume the void,
With torches lighting His triumphal way,
And all the sons of God for joy did shout
Pæans of praise—shall not this Mighty One
Order the ways of His own family,
And from sin's chaos lead the sons of men ?
Or shall we doubt that Thou, Incarnate Love,
Son of the Highest, Sent of God, canst draw
Unto Thyself all souls, though lost in sin,
In far-off regions lost to all but Thee ?

CXVIII

But must we ever follow, never lead ?
Are we not free ? May we not choose our way ?
Shall this o'ermastering force compel consent ?
Is loss of liberty the price of bliss!

CXIX

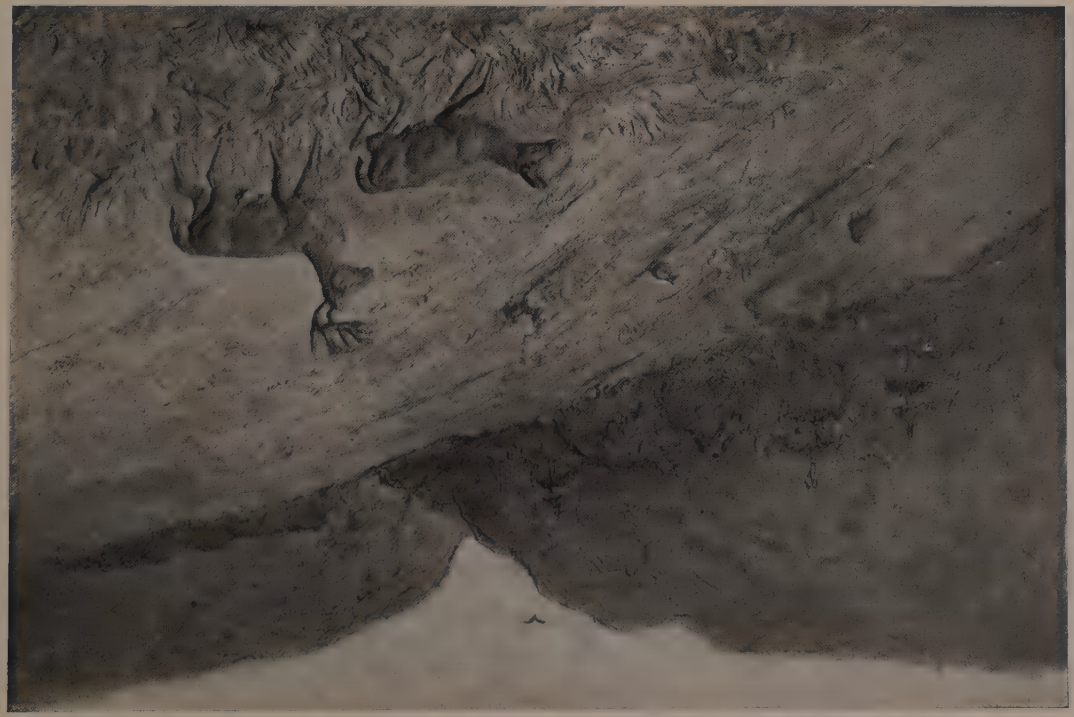
Spirit of freedom, thou dost love the sea,
Trackless and storm-tost ocean wild and free,
Faint symbol of thine own eternity.
The seagulls wheel and soar and fearless roam,
The stormy petrel dashes through the foam ;
The mighty billows heave, the tempests roar,
The diapason thunders shake the shore
And chant the song of freedom evermore.

CXX

Thou dost delight in every mountain-side
Far from the strife and eager toil of men,
Where like Thy spirit blows the unfettered wind,
Where in sweet freedom roam the deer untamed,
Where high above the darkling forest's gloom
The eagle soars, rejoicing on his way.
Author and God of freedom, Thou dost love
The mountains range on range, with glory crowned,
Kissed by the setting sun as fades the day,
Whose peaks climb heavenward toward Thy dwelling-place.
There Freedom's voice resounds from crag to crag,
There plunging torrents her glad anthem raise,
There avalanches shout her deathless name.
Thou lov'st the cataract's majestic curve
Whose waters rush impetuous, thundering down
To misty depths, with hovering Iris crowned,
Where from the abyss vast alleluias roll,
And mighty voices stir the listening soul.

CXXI

Whence hast thou thy courage, brown thrush,
brown thrush ?



Whence hast those wild bugle-tones; heard'st
thou the rush
Of troopers to battle, for rights of the free?
Who taught thee that song of liberty?

Was 't the breath of the forest, melodious bird,
Where mysterious murmurs and whispers are heard;
Where the track of the storm-king is loud with his
blast,
And the wood-giants bow till his trumpets have
passed?

Whence hast thou thy joyance, brown thrush,
brown thrush,
Thy flute-note's delight at the twilight hush,
Piping thy mate a sweet serenade
As she broods her nest in the leafy shade?

I would thou couldst teach me, brown thrush,
brown thrush
To cast off the care that my spirit would crush;
Thou seemest unconscious that aught is amiss
In this troubled world, so perfect thy bliss!

Would some hand might bestow on me vision to
see

How this wonderful earth and sky look, thrush, to thee,
And what gifts that I know not, brave minstrel, are thine:
Sing again, O bird-brother, thy carol divine!

With thy pæan of triumph, brown thrush, brown thrush,
Thy trillings, thy warblings, how limpid and lush,
My heart with thine ecstacy thou dost inspire;
Whence hast thou, whence hast thou such passionate fire?

CXXII

Author and God of freedom, Thou dost plant
In every breast a longing to be free.
Thou to the patriot's arm dost courage give
To battle with oppression and to strike
The tryant down; to break the captive's chain.
Thou dost inspire that love of liberty
Which brooks no priestly bondage of the soul
That dares forbid the mind of man to explore
Thy vast domain unfettered; tyranny
That in a cage would prison wingèd thought,

Or clip her pinions, lest she fly too far.
Thou lov'st the eager thought and life of men
Instinct with strength of their high parentage.
Nor wouldst thou have us bow in abject fear,
And faint, reluctant homage to Thee pay,
Wrung from us by o'erpowering majesty.
Wouldst Thou not have us sons of God, free-born,
Free like Thyself, as we Thine image bear?
Dost Thou not call us to high enterprise,
To master earth and sea and scale the heavens,
To broader conquest, nobler victories,
To greater triumphs of self-government,
To share Thy wondrous thoughts and walk with Thee?

CXXIII

By love of freedom led,
Our Pilgrim Fathers fled
Over the sea.
Here long they toiled and prayed,
Here deep foundations laid,
Here they a stronghold made
For Liberty.

For Liberty they fought,
And with their life-blood bought
Our native land;
Where now in peace we dwell,
Low grassy mounds still tell
Where many a hero fell
With sword in hand.

Led by that noble band,
Millions from every land
Have hither come.
For some exalted end
Doth God His children send,
And here all nations blend
In our fair home.

Strong Saxon, Freedom's heir,
Foremost to do and dare,
Leader of men;
Brave Teuton, Norseman bold
From fastnesses of cold
Whence stormed the Viking old —
Grim dragon den;

Warm-hearted Celt, and Hun
Of swarthy hue, blithe son
Of Italy;
Lone Hebrew, exile-worn,
Cast out with stripes and scorn —
All seek this blessèd bourne
Of Liberty.

From Orient's dark domain,
Armenia's tears and pain,
With one accord
Rejoicing pilgrims go
And, streaming westward, flow
Where hope's high beacons glow,
Led of the Lord.

From Ethiopia's gloom
To slavery's hopeless doom
The Negro came;
But lo, a mighty voice,
'Mid blood and battle noise,
Bade even the slave rejoice
In Freedom's name.

The Red Man, in despair,
Fled to his mountain lair
And forest wild;
Anon sweet Liberty
Invites him to her knee
And bids him, too, be free,
Her native child.

How oft, by tyrants driven,
Have these in battle striven
For kingly pride!
Now cools their hostile blood,
Now for the common good
In freedom's brotherhood
Stand they allied.

Nourished by Freedom, here
Shall a new race appear;
From many, one;
Beneath her ample shield,
Upon this wide-spread field,
Shall ancient strifes be healed,
New life begun.

Here will the Lord make plain
Things men have sought in vain
Since time's first morn;
Called forth by Freedom's might,
Here first shall see the light
Vast powers for man and right,
As yet unborn.

Ho, freemen, watch ye well,
Let no base traitor sell
Freedom for gold;
Gift of the Lord of Love,
Sent from the heavens above,
Strong eagle, gentle dove,
At one behold!

CXXIV

Be not too sure
Your freedom will endure,
Unless ye watch and guard your treasure well:
If ye but close your eyes —
Lulled by luxurious Siren singing
Into a fatal slumber and forgetting;

In eager haste for wealth and place
Heedless of woes to come and foul disgrace,
Blind to your country's home-bred foes that hide,
Lurking in ambush at your very side
While ye are sleeping or are busy getting —
Some giant may arise,
Some emissary of the powers of Hell —
A petty partisan at first,
Seized with ambition's quenchless thirst —
And in an evil hour
Grasp at imperial power.

CXXV

Or dazzled by the wild extravagance
Of nature's rich exuberance —
Storehouse of the Creator's vast reserve
Laid up our generations long to serve;
Its wealth of grain beyond all measure,
Its mines untold that gleam with treasure,
Food for the nations in distress,
Strength to defend the cause of right: —
All that the heart of man could bless
Made glorious by freedom's light
On mountain-side, and plain, and lordly river:
Beware, lest ye forget the bounteous Giver

And worship Mammon, bending low the knee —
Your high ideals on his altar laid—
Nor blush for shame, nor in his service falter;
Things of the spirit cast into the shade,
Objects of sense a weightier matter made,
Forgetting Truth's eternal majesty —
So shall ye fall from your once high estate,
The humbled victims of avenging fate,
Freedom disconsolate, the nations disappointed,
Democracy a myth, Hope mourning her anointed,
Tyrants rejoicing with unfeigned delight,
God's face averted from the hateful sight,
And over all the legend: Ichabod!
Ye cannot worship Mammon and serve God.

CXXVI

For despots on their thrones —
Builded of dead men's bones
Cement with orphans' tears,
Gilded by force and stealth
With the people's hard-earned wealth,
Haunted by dungeon groans,
Curses and ghastly fears —
May form a mighty league

To strike a stunning blow
And Freedom overthrow;
Until before their gloating eyes,
Bound hand and foot, their hated rival lies.

CXXVII

Or swarming Asian hordes,
Led by their fierce war-lords—
Long schooled by the example of their Western brothers,
When strong enough, to seize the lands of others;
Lashed into fury by the depredations
Of cormorant fleets and predatory nations
Flocking from far around the Dragon; bent
On plunder snatched in his dismemberment;
Well taught, alas, in ruthless arts of death
By followers of the Man of Nazareth—
Awakened from their long millennial slumbers,
May like a huge, on-rushing tidal wave,
Crush and destroy us 'neath o'erwhelming numbers.

CXXVIII

In the titanic struggle yet to be
When right and light and human liberty

With powers of greed and tyranny engage
In mortal combat, final war to wage—
A world-wide struggle coming-on apace
In many a waking land and longing race—
My country, do thou make a valiant fight,
And for the people's cause put forth thy might,
And may the Lord of Hosts who made thee free
Make thee, great guardian of liberty,
To lead the nations, marching in the van,
The fearless champion of the rights of man;
Arm thee with light, and with immortal fire
Thine altars keep aflame, thy heart inspire,
Lest commonweal be counted little worth;
And Freedom, throttled, perish from the earth.

The flying rumor of thy dreaded name
Affrights the tyrant, jealous of thy fame;
Where glimmering hope lights many a wistful eye
Forsake thou not the weak, consent thou not
Unto their death, nor coldly pass them by.
But if thou dare sweet freedom's boon deny
Unto a weaker people's anguished cry,
Or if thou stoop to play the tyrant's part,
Hot blood of freedom shall forsake thy heart,

And He who called thee Freedom's life to save
Shall give thee to some despot for his slave.

CXXIX

O sacred Freedom, man has loved thee long
And long for thee his precious blood has shed;
In this thy new-found home forever dwell;
Thyself an angel show, full-panoplied
Oppression to destroy, old wrongs to right,
The weak to guard and hopes untold fulfill;
Hopes of brave martyrs and of patriots gone
Who died rejoicing that thou couldst not die;
Hopes for the time to come, that brighter day
When thou shalt blessing bring to every land
Till men no more their fellows shall oppress,
Till everywhere the people rule supreme.

From Erin's isle, fair Erin long despoiled;
From struggling Cuba, trampled in her blood;
From Greece where lo! Leonidas awakes,
Startled from sleep by the intolerable cry
Of Crete beleaguered by the Iscariot nations—
Europa, shameless, harloting with Islam—
Wakes once again to face o'erwhelming odds

And stir the sluggish pulses of the world ;
From lone Armenia's massacre infernal ;
From Finland crushed, Siberia exile-cursed ;
From Amur's ghastly waters choked with dead ;
From far-off ocean-girdled Philippines,
Ground 'twixt the upper and the nether stone,
Panting from fight with Spain's long tyranny,
Betrayed and subjugated in thy name ;
From sturdy Transvaal, battling for her life,
Blood of old Huguenot and Netherlander
Outpoured upon thine altar once again,
O Freedom, hear thy martyrs cry to thee !

CXXX

What means this murmuring sound that fills the air,
Voices of anger, discontent, despair,
Misguided, crude, despised, misunderstood,
If not the waking sense of brotherhood ?

What mean this woman's tears, these children's
cries ?
What prostrate form before them bleeding lies ?
'T is freedom's martyr, who his blood has shed
For liberty to earn his children bread.

And is there then no better way than this?
Must brotherhood be risked in war's abyss?
Ah, comrades, let blind strife give way to peace :—
Assail not Freedom, let this madness cease!

Force will not break the spirit of the free,
Ye cannot kill immortal Liberty;
The fires that sweep across the burning plain
Fresh verdure bring, as grows the grass again.

O Brother Christ, Yoke-Fellow of mankind,
Help us in Thy great love our way to find,
Help us in every creature dear to Thee,
Howe'er despised, a brother-man to see.

If we but held Thy Golden Rule supreme
For men and nations, soon wouldst Thou redeem
From maddening strife and toil, our harried race,
Stilled by Thy soothing, reconciling face.

Upon the world's great longing then would rise
Such light as never broke in eastern skies;
As if mankind from long and troubled sleep
Woke to love's power, undreamed, vast, ocean-deep

Greed, from his pitiless jaws, would loose the world
And red Ambition's pirate flags be furled,
The lily and the rose make glad the waste
And men at last life's true elixir taste.

CXXXI

Ye winds of heaven, your wings are faint
With bearing cries of the oppressed;
The ages weary of the plaint,
Ah, who will hear and give them rest?

O Mother Earth, dost thou not feel
The tears that rain-like on thee fall?
Hast thou no balm these hearts to heal,
Canst thou not hear them vainly call?

O Skies, in pity stoop awhile,
How smile ye so on such despair?
Thy joy, O Sun, may not beguile
The quarry in the tiger's lair.

Forgotten of their fellow-men
They find no helper in their need;
Their life a waste, their home a den,
Victims of tyranny and greed,

They languish weary and forlorn
In penury and sore distress;
They curse the day that they were born,
Such fears appall, such woes oppress.

The wailing infant hushed and dead,
The mother's heart with anguish numb,
The father's vengeful cry for bread,
Appeal to Heaven—but Heaven is dumb.

And thinkest thou that God is dead
Who Israel out of Egypt led,
Who brought our fathers o'er the sea
And gave this land to Liberty,
Who out of bondage called the slave—
Thinkest thou these He cannot save?

The Lord with measured steps and slow
Doth onward through the ages go.
Listen! His footsteps now I hear;
Bruised hearts, your Helper draweth near.

CXXXII

A dreamer heard a warning voice declare:
"From bondage and from servile toil set free,
Man shall be free indeed; the plastic globe

Which he inhabits shall become his slave
And serve him well with forces yet unknown.
Earth's countless cataracts and ocean's tide
His yoke shall bear, his labors shall perform,
And from their tireless pulses shall stream forth
The lightnings, harnessed to obey his will.
Then unseen forces with resistless might
The groaning mill shall turn on every plain;
Like shuttles through the land his chariots urge;
Wild Winter, howling, from his hearthstone drive;
Cities illume, and from each blazing hill
Flash their auroras on the wondering night;
Pierce earth's deep entrails through with searching ray
And show the unimagined treasure there.
Borne on the ethereal tide, lo, mirrored faces
Shall, speaking, smile or scowl their dark defiance.
And voices weird shall whisper through the air
From land to land, swift flying messengers,
Finding this earth too small, too circumscribed,
Reach out afar, beyond her narrow zones
And nothing daunted, hail the passing planets!

"But not for peace alone shall men be free;
Dread enginery of war shall they devise

Before whose hideous and unpitying storm
Of terror Jove's red thunderbolts would pale
And Neptune's ineffectual trident falter.
Forth from his flaming throat the monitor
Ten leagues hurls five and twenty hundredweight
Of steel, hurtling with grewsome cries and fierce
Valkyria-song through the torn, screaming air
Amain, pregnant with Death's dire progeny.
But while this bellowing monster of the deep
Shakes Ocean, frighting all his finny tribes,
Lo, that strange narwhal traversing the main,
Disporting now athwart the foaming crest,
Now forging silent 'neath the rolling billow,
Relentless follows his unheeding prey,
'Till rushing with ferocious snout he rends
The bowels of his mighty adversary
And, helpless in the ocean solitude,
Down, down the abyss ten thousand, gasping, swirl—
And in ten thousand homes a bitter cry!"
(Art Thou so kindly, Death, thou need'st our aid?)
"Or see that floating crater lead the van,
Hell-gorged volcano spewing dynamite
Into the mine-sown harbor, ploughing deep
A pathway cleared for the invading fleets—

Tartarean furies pressing close behind—
To rain destruction on the beleaguered town.

" O, thought of terror! In a man's right hand —
Held in the feeble fingers of a man —
See that slight pencil of electric waves
Flow noiseless through the night more swift than
lightning,
Hunting those huge leviathans of war:
Of truer steel than rang on Vulcan's anvil
And with enormous armor belted round,
For devastation built, with thunders voiced—
Dread messenger of death, infernal ferret
Through massy bulwark and through ponderous
hull
Deep burrowing to the guarded magazine,
Defenceless from this finger of grim fate,
Till armament and men are swallowed up
With vast reverberation of the deep.

" And armies then afield shall silent stand
Immovable, transfixed, in rigid ranks
Arrested mid-career; uplifted feet,
Outstretchèd arms—Death's fearful pantomime.
Or mowed in sudden swaths as with a scythe,

Slain by electric currents on them turned
From silent, lightning-breathed artillery;
Or, from earth-shaking dynamos evoked
Downward shall stream by mystic forces driven,
Deep tremors through Earth's cavernous abyss,
Vast viewless shafts, with desolation barbed,
Rending with earthquake the antipodes.

"And men with joy shall cleave the buoyant air
By strange pneumatic enginery propelled—
Self-fed on life-blood of the atmosphere's
Exhaustless veins, to fluid power compressing
Titanic energies of storm and gale —
Like swallows on the wing at close of day
In mazy flight, and feeding as they fly
With many a curve and wheel for pure delight;
Or speed with flash of wingèd thought away—
Mocking the winds and beckoning them to follow,
As the swift arrow seeks the distant goal,
Or honey-freighted bee the murmuring hive.

"Yea, with vast love of speed inherited
From Him at whose command: LET THERE BE LIGHT,
For His creative joy from night sprang forth

Arcturus, Centaur, Sirius, Pleiades—
Quadriga fiery-maned, whom only He
In rein could hold, fierce plunging through the
void,
Sure guided as with flashing heel they spurn
The narrow confines of the firmament—
Shall man, impelled by innate force divine,
Grasp at sidereal velocity —
Strange mark of likeness this 'twixt son and Sire!

" Men shall be drunk with the new wine of freedom;
Nations contending for supremacy
With squadrons flying in mid air shall fight,
At fortresses and armored navies laugh,
Scoff at Gibraltar's frowning battlements
Rain from the clouds on cities deadly hail,
Infernal bombs, with soporific damp
And foul infection's fatal microbes crammed,
Surcharged to burst and flood the sleeping town
With fumes and vapors, as Death's awful breath
Crept on the cohorts of Sennacherib;
Aërial fleets, armadas tempest-flown
Rush earth-ward, striking terror unawares,
As drops the halcyon, poised above the sea,
To grapple with his prey beneath the wave.

Then ancient barriers shall naught avail,
Defenceless from the harpies of the sky;
Nor any nation hold its borders safe
From swift invasion by the wingèd foe,
Dread vampire bandits of the trackless air
Who upon lonely dwellings from afar
Descending terrify the midnight hour.
None then may imposts lay nor customs levy
Upon the unfettered commerce of the world.
And men shall strive in ever deadlier strife,
Trample on law and scorn authority,
Nor brook restraint in aught of God or man,
Order despise, and government defy
Till futile war itself must cry for peace
Or universal anarchy confront! "

CXXXIII

Hear the Creator to His children say:
" Fear ye no dreamer's evil prophecy.
Lo, I am God and even the wrath of man
Shall give me praise and the remainder I
Will, when I please, restrain, saith Love Almighty;
Yea, all the earth the meek shall yet inherit.
Evil is doomed, love only shall endure.

When strife exhausted is and license spent,
And ye are satisfied that these are vain,
Then shall ye learn of me the law of love,
And I alone will lead and make you free.
Of old I bade you conquer Earth, commanding
You to possess it, knitting land to land
Till the whole world together shall be welded
By love's eternal fires in Heaven first lit,
Bound in a universal brotherhood
Wherein the mighty shall defend the weak,
The strong unto the feeble minister,
And men and nations shall take up the cause
Of even the lowliest of the sons of men,
Nor any longer live for self alone,
Nor prey upon a neighbor's welfare, no,
Nor stoop to gain advantage with dishonor;
But humankind in love divine shall grow
Unto the stature of the Perfect Man,
Into the likeness of the Son of God,
And Self at last with Him be crucified."
(How faint, how faint the vision flits afar!)
"Then shall ye know how thin the shadowy veil
That I have hung 'twixt Earth and Heaven; how both
Matter and spirit I subservient make

Unto my ends, till matter own the spirit
Master, and ye do send your thought afar
To do your will, even mountains to remove;
And do refresh the waste of barren lives,
And do confound intrenched iniquity
With spiritual forces like a tide,
Rolling from hearts that heave with love's great billows
Crested with marvels vast, new prodigies
Wrought by love's mystical telepathy,
Deep, nascent, psychic energies unknown,
High powers which ye, my children, shall inherit—
Led in the footsteps of the Son of Man—
When time is ripe that I should call them forth.
More potent these than armaments and war
What time my chosen moved with strong desire—
Swaying as grain before the Spirit's breath—
Focus their hearts upon each common foe
Quailing astounded at the Spirit's might.
So winds of summer, sweet with meadow-bloom,
Refresh the poison fen and stagnant pool
And sweep their pestilential breath away.
Then answering thought my guiding thought shall follow
And I will show you greater things to come.

For ye shall rule with me and shall command
Obedient, subtle forces that control
The mighty movements of the universe;
And I will satisfy your longing souls
And princes ye shall be, the sons of God.
For I will give you larger freedom far
Than mortal heart has ever dared conceive
In all its wildest dreams of liberty."

CXXXIV

Lov'st thou the voice of ocean's breaking wave,
The spirit of the mountains, wild and free;
Hast thou a patriot's heart thy land to save,
Yet knowing still no loftier liberty?

Dost thou not long to break the galling chain
That binds thee to a slave's dull, narrow life?
Dost thou not long to be a child again,
Free from life's bondage and unceasing strife?

If thou wouldst manhood's dream of freedom know,
And feel thyself indeed creation's heir,
Seek thou His liberty who loves thee so
That He thy burdens on His heart doth bear.

Seek thou the freedom of the Son of God,
Who came thy princely birthright to reveal;
Who bore the stroke of thine oppressor's rod;
Who died thy glorious liberty to seal.

His freedman, thou law's bondage may'st ignore
And to thyself a law supreme shalt be;
Thy fetters then forgetting to deplore,
Whate'er thy lot, thou shalt indeed be free.

CXXXV

Our hearts cry out for freedom, we would be
Unshackled, Mighty Parent, as Thou art;
But is the fearful price of freedom risk
Of utter loss and ruin, and must that
Dark shadow ever haunt her footsteps fair
With awful shapes of terror and despair?

CXXXVI

What then is freedom's limit, where its end—
This precious boon by Heaven bestowed on men
This priceless right to every creature dear?
What in the last analysis but this:
Each power and faculty divinely given

In fullest scope to use and to enjoy,
Within the metes and bounds that God has set.
Has He full license given to erring men?
Would He bestow upon us unchecked power
Ourselves to ruin, His own work to spoil,
Himself to mock, His purpose to defeat?
Here is our limit, here our freedom ends—
Man may climb high but cannot God dethrone.
God is still Sovereign and His rule supreme.

CXXXVII

Above the clouds the soaring eagle mounts
High o'er his lofty home, but there must halt,
Though stout of heart he vainly, vainly beats
With baffled wing the thin and yielding air.

CXXXVIII

Feeble we come from darkness into light
And swift to darkness flit away again;
We come when called, we go when summoned hence;
Free though we seem, yet are we firmly bound.
Hunger and penury, disease and death,
The wayward elements, the heat, the cold,
Fierce throes and tempests of our earthly lot
Mark out the limits of our liberty.
Freedom is hedged with adamantine walls

We cannot climb, we cannot overthrow;
Upon them pass and re-pass sentinels
Divinely set to keep inviolate
The holy ground of God's prerogative.

Thou mayest hie thee to some distant bourne
Across the seas, may'st visit London, Rome,
Fair Greece; may'st climb the ancient Pyramids;
May'st thread the far, mysterious Orient,
Or at thy fireside dream of quietude.
Yet all the while, a thousand miles each minute,
Rushes the ponderous earth around the sun—
Stupendous flight!—and London, Rome, and Greece,
Gray Pyramid and slumberous Orient,
Yea, and the fireside nook where thou dost sit,
Plunge headlong with this whirling sphere amain,
And naught avails thy freedom or thy cries
To thwart the steadfast purposes of God,
Or baulk His will, which doth include thine own.

Keen appetite may freely pluck and choose
The luscious fruit that doth the hand invite,
Or grain that to the sickle nods consent;
May gather spoils of chase, of stream or flood,
With freedom and with longing day by day.—
Nor is it good for man to be alone,

Reft of the allurements and the charm of love.
For sweet companionship his soul cries out;
Imperious, scorning every fetter, love
Will have his own, and taste with new delight
The joy of passion's wild delirium.

So useth God man's hunger and desire;
Yea, brutish lust His purpose doth o'errule
To save the man, to save the race from death —
Our wills left free, His sovereign will supreme.

CXXXIX

Wild storms across the ocean rage uncurbed
Till on the rockbound coast they rush amain
Where ancient, weather-beaten crags, unmoved
By all the tumult of the thundering sea,
Disdainful hurl the invading legions back
And mock the fury of the winds and waves.

CXL

Despite the envious ills of life,
The grinding toil, the rasping strife,
What mighty works of hand and pen
Have been achieved by mortal men
In spite of all, in spite of all.

Through long milleniums slowly past
His pyramids unshaken last,
Still witnessing 'mid shifting sands
The triumph of those withered hands
In spite of all, in spite of all.

Though crumbling ruin disappear
The immortal epic still I hear,
That, when this aged world was young,
In spite of all, for me was sung,
In spite of all, in spite of all.

Though bound to earth with iron chains
The soul her prison-house disdains,
Essaying with audacious wing
Vast searchings for some deathless thing,
In spite of all, in spite of all.

CXLI

From the vexed shore I watched the storming main;
The trembling earth recoiled and shook again
As from the blows of some gigantic hand
That hurled the billows high upon the strand.
Rejoicing, thought I: "Mighty though thou art,
Less mighty thou, O Sea, than man's brave heart.

"Thou canst not heave thy raging waves so high
But some proud keel thy fury will defy;
Thou hast no depths so gloomy or profound
Man with his daring plummet may not sound,
And while thy tempests and tornadoes roar
He whispers through the deep, from shore to shore."

CXLII

No petty bounds has God around us drawn
Nor will He close us in a narrow space;
Undaunted and unsatisfied, the soul
Of man cries out for other, larger worlds.
Not any world, nor all the worlds can sate
That quenchless thirst God only can appease,
That breath divine into his nostrils breathed
When the Almighty Parent gave him life.

CXLIII

I stood beneath the blazing dome of night;
My spirit shrank within me at the sight;
I was as nothing, yea, the earth was lost
In the still presence of that mighty host.

Yet heard I from the heavens a whisper fall;
" Rejoice, O man, thy Father made them all;
A child of God, thyself a god shalt be,
Heir of the riches of infinity."

CXLIV

Free through our Father's kingdom shall we roam,
With treasure stored, against our coming home;
Explore the labyrinth of worlds on high,
Whose distant glory lights the starry sky ;
And He will lead us o'er the glittering plain
And show the wonders of His vast domain;
Show us the works that He for us had wrought
When we were living only in His thought.
There will He show us fields for nobler strife
And room for larger, ever larger life.
So measureless His wealth, so great His might,
That He could give us each an orb of light,
A glorious world to rule, our own to call,
And yet would have enough to spare for all.
Yet from the throne of His almighty power
He stoops to paint the tiny wayside flower;
In pity sees the little wounded bird
Whose death-cry by no other ear is heard;

And on the trusting child-heart, meek and pure,
His greater kingdom founds, forever to endure.

CXLV

Think not that love is feeble or supine,
Or yields to wrong, or would at ease recline;
Love is no sickly dotard bent with years,
No blushing maiden melting into tears.

Love is a mighty passion, and a flame
No force can overpower, no conquest tame ;
Love is all-strong to knit us man to man—
Ah, when will Earth consent to Heaven's plan ?

Unlike aught else in earth or sea or sky,
Love must itself impart or it will die ;
Love grows by giving, and is not content
Unless for its belovèd it is spent.

Love is an angel whose awakening light
Can rouse the darkest soul, sunk deep in night;
Sent to refresh mankind so long oppressed,
Love yet shall light the world, for love is best.

CXLVI

Lofty the patriot's love of Fatherland,
As on the battle-field with open arms
He rushes on the foe in fierce embrace,
And gathering to his heart a sheaf of spears,
Exulting cries: " Make way for liberty! "

CXLVII

Strong are the bonds of friendship firm and tried,
Soul answering soul in sweet communion true.
See friend for friend upon the scaffold mount,
Before the unsuspecting headsman kneel
And, life for life resigning with a smile,
Pay for his friend the last dread penalty.

CXLVIII

Royal the lover of his fellow-men
Whose heart through pity springs the weak to aid.
Though furious breakers wildly plunge and roar
The life-boat bears him to yon shipwrecked crew,
Lashed to the frozen rigging in despair ;
A succor to the helpless, left alone,
When from the stricken town the people fly

The pestilence, as leaves before the storm ;
Moving among the wounded and the dead
Where pity's angels raise the Red-Cross banner ;
Self-exiled on the leper's lonely isle,
Content with him to dwell, with him to die,
If he may help him bear his hopeless lot ;
A brother to the captive in his cell—
Sick and in prison and disconsolate—
Unknowing visits and consoles his Lord.

CXLIX

Ah, love and love alone at last will solve
All the vast, threatening questions that distract
Mankind; that fellow-men in strife array,
And the whole world with fierce contentions rend.
Still keep your idle millions under arms—
Fed on the hard-earned substance of the poor—
Still watch each other with keen jealousy,
Still slaughter thousands on the field of war,
Or strive with statesman's craft to arbitrate;
Thread the sly mazes of diplomacy,
Try communistic cures for every ill,
And when all fails at last, for lack of love,
Try love—the mightiest of them all—and win!

CL

Tender affections at the hearthstone dwell,
Foregleams of heavenly bliss that hallow home.
O gentle sister, thy sweet ministry
Softens like angel's touch the couch of pain—
What purer love has earth to show than thine!
Wondrous the marvel and the spell of love
That clothes the earth with new and tender light
Shed from the halo round the loved one's brow
And for the lover makes creation new.
O wedded love, how like the echoes fly
From heart to heart, unceasing to and fro,
The pain, the joy, the rapture evermore:
What magic this, of twain to make but one!

CLI

Stronger than death, or life, or death in life
The mother true recks not of ease or pain
So she may comfort and defend her child;
Sure refuge this, when other there is none.
O little arms that softly round her twine,
Cling with your tendrils to this sacred tree
That with perennial beauty ever blooms—
We need no further go Heaven's peace to find.

O father, living over early days
In boyish pastimes with thy first-born son,
Thou knowest whether love be strong or no.
O infant, smiling in thy father's arms,
Lone rescued waif from the wild storm of death
Engulfing mother, children, all save thee,
Soft on his stricken heart a blessing lie—
Night-blooming cereus in his midnight gloom—
At early dawn of thy dear life. What more
Of comfort for the past's dark mystery
Could Heaven bestow to keep him from despair?

CLII

The babe forlorn and motherless
She laid upon her heart love-starved and lone;
Her soul went forth in each caress,
Her wealth of love outpoured in every tone.

When smiled the Spring with blithesome lays
In flowery paths she led the little feet,
And in the dark and stormy days
Her fond, protecting arms made refuge sweet.

CLIII

Such noble gleams of love our life adorn—
So full of sordid care and hard routine—
Like precious jewels in an iron crown.
Behold the torch's flame, the patriot fires
That burn where myriad heroes martyred fell,
Lighting the path of Truth and Liberty;
Behold the golden net of friendship wove
From heart to heart, to earth's remotest bound;
Behold the mother-love exhaustless flowing
Where murmurous toilers with laborious drone,
'Mid their sole summer's bloom, ere soon they die
Garner rich stores to nourish young unborn;
In wild beast lair, in hole of creeping thing,
In tuneful nest whose joy o'erflows the wood,
In countless homes of men, or high or low,
Outpoured for helpless babes since time began;
All pure and holy love of man or maid,
Of father for his son, of prodigal
For his lost home, of kith for kin, of man
For fellow-man behold beneath the sun;
Yea, of blest spirits, of celestial hosts
That fill the heavens with love's sweet melody.
But what are these and all those untold powers

Of sacred love, save sparks from that great flame
Which unconsumed, burns like a central sun
With light too strong for our dull mortal sight;
What but light ripples on that boundless sea
Whose waters wrap the globe in their embrace
And wash the shores of every distant isle;
What but faint pulses of the mighty stream
That flows forever from the heart of God
All worlds to bathe, all souls to animate!

CLIV

Ah Lord, I fain would sing Thy praise
But feeble is my voice;
Yet when I dwell upon Thy love,
How can I but rejoice?

I want no flickering candle flame
To light my doubtful way;
I want Thy love, the mighty sun
Whose glory fills the day.

Of all the splendors round Thy throne
I see but scattered rays;
Yet these, imperfect though my sight,
Have gladdened all my days.

When on Thy breast my head I lay
In Thy strong love secure,
I care not how the tempests rave,
They cannot long endure.

When my cold winter feels the glow
Of Thy resplendent beams,
Immortal spring within me wakes
And sunlight on me streams.

CLV

Do well thy part
With hand and heart,
Nor let dull care
Thy spirit wear;
And when thou feel'st how poor and weak thou art,
Lean thou thy head on God's almighty heart.
The fight is long,
The foe is strong;
Thy strength is small
And fears appall;
Fret not thyself to know how soon the strife will end,
For thou may'st safely leave it all to God, thy Friend.

CLVI

But are not mind and matter under law?
And is there not in sin a law that drags
Us step by step to lower, darker depths
Until we perish in the foul abyss?

CLVII

He rules by law, His law is over all
Who first appointed day and night, Who set
The varied seasons in procession fair—
The hope of spring, the summer's life and joy,
The fruit of autumn and the winter's cold—
Who gave a restless longing to the tide
That follows the bright moon from shore to shore,
Led by the witching spell of her fair face.

CLVIII

Well I recall the night
Of that rare summer day!
A tender rosy light
Caressed the rippling bay;

The sunset splendor fell
Athwart heaven's arches high,
Till like a vast sea-shell
Transfigured rose the sky.

Down from the opal height
A pearl shone on the deep,
Hung on the breast of Night
To grace her balmy sleep.

The moonglade on the sea
A dream of glory lay,
As if inviting me
Along the glittering way.

Why should the Queen of Night
Reach out her silver wand
And lay a path of light
To me wherever I stand?

Would she her secret show?
Am I her chosen one?
Why follow where I go?
Am I heaven's favored son?

Fool, on whatever distant strand
The moon this night a man shall meet,
To him she points her mystic wand
And lays a pathway to his feet.
There's light and love in Heaven's rich store
For every man, on every shore.

CLIX

The cyclone and tornado that we fear
Are but the eddies of the constant winds,
Those currents vast, those great aërial tides
That flow by God's command from zone to zone,
Laden with blessing for the thirsty land.
By His great power all forces interchange,
One universal force of many forms,
Even of one substance all the elements
That build the solid earth and all thereon,
Emblem and effluence of His unity.
By His deep thought the electric current runs
To move a million wheels at man's behest,
From motion unto heat, from heat to light—
Fierce heat of tropic suns ere man appeared;
Light born of light of long primeval days,
Deep hidden till man's need should call it forth

From sunless caverns, black with ancient gloom.
At His command the elements, in haste,
Each with its own affinity, combine
In countless forms of order and of grace :
The smooth-cut crystal, and the spiral shell,
Bird-plumage, and the blushing flower of spring,
The tinted autumn leaf, the snowy wreath,
The ice-storm's pure transfiguration robe—
He to each atom gives relentless law.

CLX

God rules by law, but law can never bind
His sovereign power, or to His will set bounds
Who made the worlds, and called us from the dust.
He has no master, law is not His lord,
'T is but the record of His way, the path
Made by His footsteps through the universe.
Untrammelled and alone His way He takes—
And who shall say His path He may not choose ?—
While Nature with her wondrous processes
And inarticulate speech in myriad tongues—
Unutterable longings—strives in vain
Her homage to her august Ruler to proclaim.

CLXI

He whose slow movements look to our dull eyes—
Which cannot see beyond this transient phase
In the vast cycles of Creative Thought—
Like changeless laws, inexorably fixed,
Sole Legislator is, the Primal Cause
Of all the stately order of the world ;
Sole Legislator and Executive.

CLXII

He who created heavenly orbs to roll
In paths, marked out by His almighty hand,
That will not let them swerve from age to age;
Who moves the hearts of men to will and do—
While mind, unknowing, follows His deep law—
By law He rules, but of it all the soul,
The reason, motive, end and aim is love;
For man's eternal good His laws were made—
To save one soul He would annul them all.

CLXII *a*

I dreamed that God had slain His child,
That to the void of chaos wild

The helpless spirit He had tossed;
All hope and life forever lost:
A soul, of God's own soul a part,
Cast out forever from His heart!

I dreamed that God in vast remorse
Sat looking at that little corse
Which slowly faded out of sight,
Lost in the abyss of endless night.
Horror—! 'T was His own life He took,
While throe on throe creation shook.

Disturbed, I slept and dreamed again
Of multitudes of struggling men
O'erwhelmed in quicksands, and the sea
Broke fierce upon their misery,
While a Voice mocked them from the shore.
I made you free, I can no more!

From fears and shadows I awoke,
As in my ear an angel spoke:
Fear not the terrors of the night,
And whispered, God is Love, and Light:
Nor shall His purpose know defeat,
Nor failure cloud the Mercy-Seat.

CLXII *b*

Wouldst God malign! Or dar'st thou say
This sin-blind soul so far can stray,
So far—dread thought—from God may slide,
That nothingness its end shall hide:
Down, down sin's ever steepening slope,
Till Night's vast chasm engulf all hope!

It may not be, it may not be!
God hath responsibility—
His breath awoke us from the dust,
His life is ours, and live we must;
His might His children will defend,
Nor let disaster blight our end:
He who pronounced creation good
Must vindicate His Fatherhood.

Still in our flesh there dwells a power,
A precious boon, a priceless dower,
On man and beast alike bestowed,
On lowliest flower beside the road,
Vouchsafed of Heaven to ease our pain
And shield us all from deadly bane;

Whereby our Mother Nature strives,
With loving touch to guard our lives —
Though faint from wounds, though sorely hurt —
By her protecting arms engirt.

Beyond the shadows of that bourne
Before whose silent gates we mourn,
A new and wonderful surprise
Awaits our dull, our earth-bound eyes,
Which, cleared of earthly mist, shall see
The soul's divine anatomy,
Whose vigor and immortal glow
Sin-scar, sin-dwarfing shall outgrow.

Then shall our spirits, freed by fire,
Sweep Heavenward, urged by vast desire,
And, as our cerements drift afar,
Shine forth, kissed by the morning-star.
A feeble embryo here on earth
Shall in that vital air have birth,
A mighty force, from weakness here,
In majesty shall there appear —
A heavenly power to make us whole,
Vis medicatrix of the soul.

O Good Physician, wake this dormant power!
Heal me! I fain would know, even now, my soul's
rich dower.

CLXII *c*

Not always gradual is our upward way
From darkling shadows to the realm of day.
The soul too earth-worn mountain steeps to climb
May rush on eagle's wings to heights sublime;
For there be wonders of new life to come,
Whereat our vaunted wisdom shall stand dumb,
Our close-knit systems shrivel in the light
That streams forthflaming of the Spirit's might,
Which bloweth wheresoe'er it listeth, free—
The zephyr's breath, the cyclone's energy.

Spurning the cone-bound circle and ellipse,
The freed parabola from prison slips;
On vast, expanding pinion seeks the skies,
In growth, eternal growth, exulting flies.

CLXII *d*

When Saul of Tarsus faced the light
That smote him blind of earthly sight,

His soul to clearer vision woke,
Stirred by the gracious Voice that spoke.

So, when earth's dream of sin is past,
This sin-blind soul shall wake at last
To see the One he long hath spurned,
Whose clinging love for him hath yearned,

And, torn with agony of shame,
Shall call with rapture on the name
Of Him he never knew before,
And, seeing clearly, shall adore.

CLXII *e*

My heart is filled with pent-up fire,
I feel a strange, a fierce desire ;
Within me stirs an urgent flame,
I burn ; my heart I cannot tame !
Oh, that some hand might give release,
Oh, that my prison-life might cease !
Deep buried in eternal night,
Whose touch, ah, whose, shall give me light ?
So cried the cobble men disdain,
So cries the human soul in pain.

The cobble in the pavement lay ;
Over it rumbling, day by day,
The jarring traffic, ebbed and flowed,
Hard crunched the geode each passing load ;
Till, bruised, as rubbish thrown aside,
A student's eye its worth descried.
With hammer deft its shell he broke
When, lo, its heart of beauty woke !

Rich treasure-house of gems whose sheen
For countless ages lay unseen ;
Wee fairy grot, stalactite maze
Aglow with iris-tinted rays—
Lost fragment of the city fair
The seer of Patmos saw in air !

Oh, brothers, will ye dare to say
The darkest soul is castaway ?
Ye know not when a Hand Divine
Shall bid its wealth of crystal shine,
Its earth-worn prison house shall break,
Its darkness unto glory wake !

CLXIII

He who each atom guards so jealously
That in great Nature's ever changing forms

No particle is lost, no waste is made
Of her stupendous energy, who hears
The hungry raven's cry for food, who sees
Each little sparrow as it falls, who clothes
The lilies of the field in regal hues;
Will surely never let a precious soul—
Breath of His breath, life of His life—drift off
Into eternal night, beyond His reach,
In self-wrought ruin wrecked, an utter loss;
Will not permit the will of man to thwart
His will supreme, nor let another sit
Upon His throne, and the dark powers of Hell
And anarchy usurp His government.

CLXIV

'T is but a spectral phantom of the night;
There is no room for two, God filleth all.
Evil is not God's rival, 't is His slave
Who yet shall serve Him, though he now rebel.
Fear not, Almighty Love is at the helm!

CLXV

We may be fellow-laborers with God,
But 't is of grace He lets us work with Him,

That of His joy a foretaste we may know.
Slight need has He that any human hand
Should steady, with presumptuous touch, the Ark—
The golden Ark that bears man's destiny—
Upon its journey toward His Holy Place
Whither, in serried ranks, the generations march.

CLXVI

God is a Spirit; they that worship Him
Must worship Him in spirit and in truth.
Nor dwelleth He in temples made with hands;
God is a Spirit; He enfolds the world
In His embrace as flows the atmosphere
Around the earth, submerging all thereon
In viewless waves. In Him we live and move
As in the all-pervading air. In Him
We have our being and He is not far
From every one of us; more intimate,
More necessary than the air we breathe.
And of one blood all nations hath He made,
Whose times, whose habitations and whose bounds
He hath before determined and appointed—
Mankind the offspring of Almighty God!
Nor doth His Spirit brood the earth alone;

If we on eagle wings of thought ascend
The ethereal heights of heaven, awe-stricken, lost
Amid the mighty maze, lo, God is there
And like the subtile ether bathes all worlds,
O'erflowing boundless interstellar voids.
If, fleeing Him, we make our bed in Hell,
There too is God; even there through all the gloom
His sunrise breaks to herald coming day!
We have no measure for Him, time is naught
And space too small, our thought He doth elude;
When we would give Him highest praise, and call
Him Light and Love, we stumble in our night,
Lisping faint echoes only of His name.

CLXVII

Of Him, and to and through Him, all things are;
He fills the earth, the sea, the air with forms
In number infinite, a countless host;
He, from His treasury, with generous hand
His boundless riches scatters far and wide;
He peoples ocean deeps and forest wilds,
The solitude, and busy haunts of men
With teeming life, in vast profusion poured
From His exhaustless fount in swelling floods

From year to year, great Source and Goal of Life!
Endless diversity, each life a thought
Of God, unique, incarnate thought divine!
How precious are Thy thoughts to me, O God,
How great the sum of them! If I should count,
Behold, they are more in number than the sand!
Vast evolution of revolving worlds,
Endless procession of the centuries,
The rise and fall of races and of empires,
All men, all things, all movements, all events
Shew forth the varied phases of His thought—
At one in the vast sweep of His design—
All tributary to the stream that flows
From age to age His purpose to fulfil.
To us that stream meanders, sluggish, slow,
With many an eddying pool and backward turn;
To His clear sight, through His unwasting years,
To swell the waters of Unfathomed Love,
A mighty river rushes to the sea,
Sprung from the depths of His majestic unity.

CLXVIII

'T is but His hand that doth encompass us.
Hid in the hollow of that fostering palm,

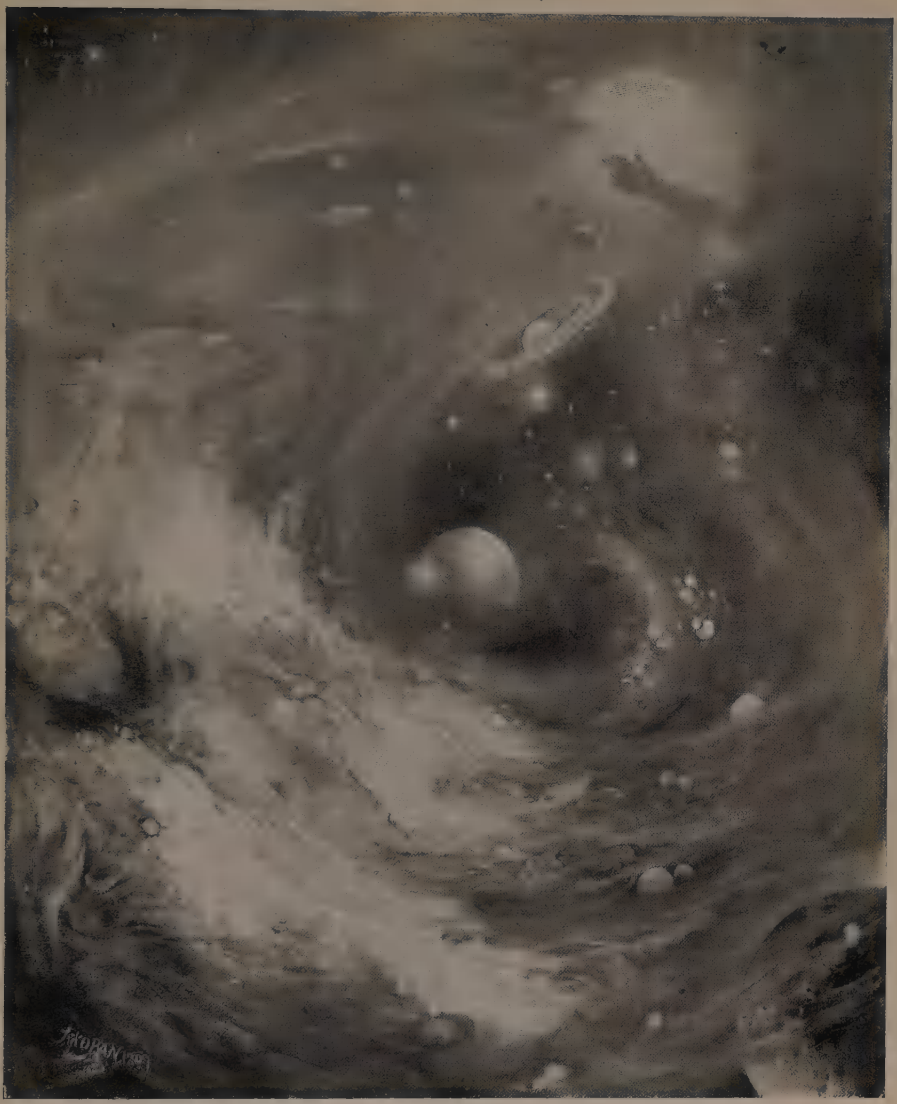
Like precious pearls the glowing planets lie,
And with them burning suns as diamonds flash.
These, from His hand let slip, roll forth to shine
In starry halo circling round His head,
And like a garment wove of light down-sweeping—
Rich fiery gems inwrought with regal splendor—
Veiling with light the Light Ineffable,
Forth from His feet they flow, a mystic stream—
Each glistening drop a sun, each wave a system—
Spray-dust of worlds tossed by the mighty current,
River of Life, resistless and sublime,
Voices of many waters uttering praise.

CLXIX

O Love Supreme, wilt Thou not speak
In tones that we can understand,
And lead us by Thy guiding hand?
Unaided, Thee we vainly seek.

CLXX

Rend Thou the heavens and hasten down,
Bring light where lowers Fate's darksome frown,



Show man the heights from whence he came,
Confuse his evil thoughts with shame.
Unveil Thy face in dazzling splendor hid,
O Thou whom all the happy heavens adore,
Come dwell the sufferers of earth amid,
Come heal the hearts of men with travail sore.
Almighty One, draw nearer to our race
And by some new disclosure of Thy grace
Reveal to troubled man Thine unknown face.

CLXXI

He for us men, to share our toil and pain
And grief, and lead us to immortal joy,
Dwelt in our flesh that we might see His face;
And that dread Face on which no mortal man
Could look and live, before whose searching light
The earth and heaven fled and there was found
No place for them, that face, veiled in our flesh,
Veiled as the sun's fierce splendor in the moon,
The moonlight in the placid ocean's gleam,
So full of grace and help and brotherhood,
Shall draw us to Himself until all men
In every clime, shall seek and find their Lord.

CLXXII

How strong art Thou, great Son of God?
  Canst Thou bid sin's wild tumult cease?
Canst Thou destroy oppression's rod
  And lead the nations forth in peace?

Great Son of God, art Thou so strong
  That we may safely cling to Thee
Assured, though troubles round us throng,
  Thy triumph we at last shall see?

Great Son of God, art Thou so strong
  Thou over all wilt Victor be,
Leading behind Thee Death and Wrong,
  Spoils of Thy mighty victory?

Canst Thou with life's dark evils cope?
  Dost Thou our fears and sorrows know?
Canst Thou fulfil immortal hope;
  Or must we to some other go?

To whom, to whom then shall we turn?
  Whose hand shall point our homeward way?
What other friendly beacons burn
  With light to guide us to the day?

Thou art the Bread that feeds the soul,
On Thee alone our hearts are stayed;
Through all the maze Thou art the Goal,
'Mid all the clamor undismayed.

CLXXII *a*

Thou who the wrath of man didst bear
And meekly his reviling took;
Who would his pain and sorrow share
When cruel he his Friend forsook,
Tell me what wondrous recompense Thy love will give
To one who would not suffer Thee with him to live!

CLXXII *b*

Beneath His burden bent,
With shame and woe forspent,
The Lord of all
To earth did fall—
Faint on the road to Calvary.

Ah, who unmoved can see
The Saviour's misery,
Crushed by that load
Upon the road—
The cruel road to Calvary?
And is there none who dare
That heavy burden share
With Him who bore,
In anguish sore,
The Cross for all to Calvary?
Son of Cyrené, thou
Thy stalwart back didst bow
And win renown,
The ages down,
Upon the road to Calvary!

CLXXIII

O Desire of every nation,
Canst Thou lead me to the goal?
Hast Thou truth's clear revelation?
Hast Thou quiet for my soul?
For Thy rest my heart is yearning,
Make my peace and joy complete;
Meekly of my Teacher learning,
See me waiting at Thy feet.

Mighty Saviour, Elder Brother,
  Draw me nearer, nearer Thee;
Be my Guide, I have no other,
  Lead to perfect liberty.

Give me of Thy heavenly treasure,
  Let me Thy great glory see,
Heir of triumph without measure,
  Show Thy way to victory!

CLXXIV

Is it a mighty, rushing wind
  Whose hurried breath I feel?
Do echoes of the thunder deep
  Roll nearer, peal on peal?
The Spirit of Almighty God
  I thought, swept quickly by;
Great Messenger of Love to man
  With blessings from on high.

The serried hosts of Heaven are hushed
  In awe, with one accord
They all expectant wait to hear
  The answer of their Lord,
That with a greater joy makes glad
  The realms of heavenly bliss

And lights with Hope's angelic smile
Earth's sorrow, sin's abyss.

CLXXV

And then upon my ear there fell a Voice
So full of sympathy it seemed to bear
The woes of all the ages in its heart.
About the Voice of Majesty there clung
And blossomed tones of infinite desire,
Sweeter than if all voices that I love
In one loved song their tendrils intertwined,
Yet strong to bear the weight of sin, of grief
Yea, the stupendous burden of the world.
Breathless I heard, and hung upon that Voice
As clings the trembling vine upon the oak
That wrestles with the whirlwind and the night.

CLXXVI

"Crucified in shame and anguish,
Left in mortal pain to languish,
Broken-hearted and alone;
Powers of evil overtook me,
God Himself, methought, forsook me,
Darkness gathered round His throne.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

אלהי אלהי למה שבקתני

"Then, like billows o'er me breaking,
While the earth with fear was shaking,
All the sorrows of the world
Filled my heart to overflowing;
And the tempest, fiercely blowing,
On my head its fury hurled.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"In the darkness round me fluttered
Frightful forms that wildly uttered
Cries that smote me with dismay;
Cries from all the world, bewailing
Every woe mankind assailing,
Rose from out the vast array.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Cries of scorn my love denying,
Cries of hate my love defying,
Cries of terror, loss and pain;
Man, his brother man tormenting,
Crafty malice unrelenting,
Captives galled with slavery's chain.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

Ignorance and degradation,
Darkness veiling every nation,
With a hideous night-wove shroud;
Grovelling shapes of superstition
Hostile to my heavenly mission,
Hissing imprecations loud.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Might o'er right and truth prevailing,
Brutal force the weak assailing,
Who for mercy beg in vain;
Base assassins darkly creeping
On unconscious victims, sleeping
Nevermore to wake again.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Widowed hearts in anguish crying
For their lost ones, dead or dying
Where no human help can save;
Empty arms their darlings missing,
Mothers their dead infants kissing
Ere they give them to the grave.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

'Outcast, desolate, neglected,
Fatherless and unprotected,
Homeless children vainly plead;
None my little ones to cherish,
Sold in dens of shame to perish,
Ruined by inhuman greed.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Vampire Greed, insatiate, strangling,
In its loathsome wings entangling,
Slowly smothering, young and old;
On the poor and helpless battening,
On the blood of infants fattening
Slain to sate its lust for gold.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

'Nations bought and sold like cattle,
Horrors of the siege and battle
Counted naught, so Greed may live;
Manhood crushed and Freedom harried,
Virtue to Oppression married,
Forced her hand for gold to give.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"War, the wide world desolating,
Home and honor desecrating,
Fierce ambition's tyranny;
Women's tears in terror flowing,
Helpless babes no mercy knowing,
Massacre and infamy.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Ruthless hands with slaughter reeking,
Ravished Night aghast and shrieking,
Lurid flames athwart the sky;
'Neath the sword the helpless sinking,
Loathing Earth their life-blood drinking,
Loud and long their bitter cry.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Plague and Famine, grimly stalking,
Hand in hand together walking
Like twin spectres through the lands;
Stricken men like dead leaves falling,
Loud for bread, for succor calling,
Reaching out weak, helpless hands.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Sotted men, by man's temptation
Lured to lower degradation
Till they grovel in the mire;
By the still's dread serpent bitten,
With infernal frenzy smitten,
Every vein aflame with fire.

Angels Chanting: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Sin, a silver voice alluring,
New delights, new joys assuring,
Gay with gladsome revelry;
With her harlot-smile essaying
Man to conquer, while betraying
With beguiling devilry.

Angels Chanting: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Sin, a stealthy serpent hiding,
In low ambush lurking, gliding
On the unsuspecting prey;
In whose tightening folds entangled,
Vitals crushed and carcass mangled,
Hope and courage ebb away.

Angels Chanting: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Sin, a sore disease attacking—
With slow mutilation racking—
Man's divinely moulded shape;
Limb by limb its poison blighting,
Man its dread advances fighting,
Dazed and hopeless of escape.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Sin, a ravening monster prowling,
For new victims ever howling —
What foul demon gave it birth !—
Sin, a whelming flood o'erflowing
Every bulwark, wildly strewing
Wreck and ruin through the earth.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Sin's mad folly unrepented,
Men by sin and woe demented,
Reason driven from her throne;
All the world sin-sick and dying,
Man his Maker's will defying
Who shall man with God atone ?

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

" Sent to carry consolation
To mine own down-trodden nation
Whom in tender love I sought;
Promised long and long expected,
Spit upon, despised, rejected,
All my travail set at nought.

Angels Chanting: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

" Crowned a king with ribald mocking,
Dragged through crowds like vultures flocking,
Doomed with sinners to be slain;
Love's supremest revelation,
Love's eternal consummation,
Spurned by Gentiles with disdain.

Angels Chanting: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

" Deeper than the thorn's incision
Sank the mocking crowd's derision
And the scoffer's fiery dart;
Fiercer than the rough nails crushing
Through my flesh, upon me rushing
Cruel hatred pierced my heart.

Angels Chanting: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"For the world my blood was flowing,
Love to all the ages showing,
For the world and nothing less;
Should my love be thus defeated,
Should my work be ne'er completed,
Should my sorrows fail to bless?

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Should man's direful need o'erpower me,
Should the jaws of night devour me
Where vast, formless terrors loom?
Deeper, deadlier, drifting, drifting,
Naught of light the blackness rifting,
Fell impenetrable gloom.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

"Crushed by sin, for sinners bleeding,
Hopeless love for sinners pleading
Met man's last great enemy;
Torn by grief, forspent with wonder,
By my passion rent asunder,
Broke my heart in agony.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

" Why, my God, hast Thou forsaken
And Thy succor from me taken;
Why in darkness hid Thy face ?—
Then from glory swift descending
And in pity o'er me bending,
Love Almighty sought me there;
Clasped me close, death-stricken, shrinking,
All my senses fainting, sinking
In the stupor of despair;
And at once I was victorious,
Strengthened by a vision glorious;
Vision of triumphant grace.

Angels Chanting: "*Alleluia, alleluia !*"

" ' Thou all nations shalt inherit,'
Spake the Comforter, the Spirit,
' And Thou shalt not die in vain.
Precious seed Thy blood shall nourish,
Till o'er all the earth shall flourish
Harvests ripe with golden grain.

Angels Chanting: "*Alleluia, alleluia !*"

" ' When Thy travail shall be over,
Thou, man's changeless Friend and Lover
Shalt be fully satisfied.

Nevermore shall aught defeat Thee,
God in glory soon shall greet Thee,
Thee His Son, so sorely tried.'

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

" Then, ah, then my sorrows ended,
As to God my cry ascended:
' It is finished,' and I died.
And a pang of consternation
And a trembling, seized creation,
Palpitating deep and wide.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

" And Death sheathed his sword and cried:
' I surrender, Galilean;
Though I smote Thee sore, Thy pæan
Soon with joy shall fill the skies.
Thou art Master, more than mortal.
Though, betrayed, to me they sold Thee,
I, defeated, shall behold Thee
Through my stronghold's broken portal
Lord of Life and Death arise.'

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

" From afar, with malediction,
Sin beheld my crucifixion,
Read therein impending doom,
Fled with muttered imprecations,
Sowing discord through the nations,
Breeding terror, blight and gloom.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Miserere, miserere!*"

" Cup of sorrows fiercely blended,
In my Father's hand extended,
Deep in mortal anguish sunken,
I the bitter dregs have drunken
Man to lead to God his Home;
Day of shame, with terror crowded,
Day of dread, in darkness shrouded,
There obedient love and meekness
Found, through seeming loss and weakness,
Found for man love's hidden treasure,
Love's deep mystery did measure;
Love's full stream no limits knowing,
From my cross forever flowing,
Prayer of all the ages granting,
Deathless seed of promise planting,
I the world have overcome.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Long the conflict will be raging,
Powers of Heaven and Earth engaging,
But the end is fixed and sure;
Powers of evil in alliance,
Hurl at me their fierce defiance,
But my kingdom shall endure.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"I upon my heart have taken
All the world with conflict shaken,
Hurt by sin, by grief oppressed;
Ye who heavy burdens carry,
Come, I love you, do not tarry,
Come and I will give you rest.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"All the hosts that never knew me,
E'en the foes that mocked and slew me,
I will draw all men to me;
Men and spirits in commotion —
Like the tide-swept, moon-led ocean —
Drawn by love to Calvary.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"I to Hades have descended
And the imprisoned souls befriended,
Bearing hope of liberty;
There my right as Victor claiming,
Wrath and sin and terror taming—
Hades—moved—shall flee to me.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Every fetter shall be broken;
In my cross behold the token
And the pledge of liberty;
I will banish all oppression
Till, throughout my vast possession
Every creature shall be free.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Sin its victims shall surrender,
I will be their strong defender,
I my healing will impart;
Cruel death no more shall sever,
Sorrow's reign shall cease forever,
I will comfort every heart.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Death, once like a despot seated,
I have challenged and defeated,
Overturned the tyrant's throne;
And the shadow has been lifted,
Clouds of night with glory rifted —
In thick darkness light is sown.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Lo, the light of hope is breaking,
Myriads from their slumber waking,
It shall cheer all souls at last;
Hope unfailing, never ending,
Light into the darkness sending,
Till the troubled night is past.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Then my peace forever flowing,
Like the south wind softly blowing,
Calling forth the joy of spring;
To all hearts with conflict weary,
Worn with care and labors dreary,
Everlasting rest shall bring.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

Offspring of celestial fountains
In the everlasting mountains,
Truth shall flow, a gladdening stream;
With its flood of living waters
To refresh earth's sons and daughters
And from Error's rule redeem.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

Then transcendent in her beauty,
Faithful long to love and duty,
I shall clasp my Church, my Bride.
Then the lone and disappointed,
Sought for by the Lord's Anointed,
Shall at last be satisfied.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

Then unto my Father bringing
All His children, glad and singing,
They His glorious face shall see;
In love-marshalled hosts before Him
All the nations shall adore Him,
Strong in life and liberty.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Let this vision ever cheer thee,
Tell the nations, let them hear thee,
Every soul to me is dear;
Tell to all mankind the story—
Wouldst thou haste the coming glory,
Bear good tidings far and near.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"Bear my word to every creature;
I will be thy Guide and Teacher,
Keeping ever at thy side;
Let no doubt thy faith diminish,
I my work will surely finish,
Bid thy heart my time abide.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

"See the waiting hosts that need thee,
Come, Belovèd, I will lead thee,
Love is conquering the world;
Give thyself, thyself unheeding,
For thy brother toiling, bleeding
Where my banner is unfurled.

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

" Have thou courage, do not falter,
God his purpose will not alter,
Let thy heart be undismayed;
Death from his pale horse unseated,
Hell destroyed and sin defeated,
Love triumphant, joy completed,
God by all shall be obeyed."

ANGELS CHANTING: "*Alleluia, alleluia!*"

CLXXVII

Like organ tones that with majestic roll
And deep reverberation stir the soul,
The listener's weary heart with rapture fill,
Until with heavenly peace its pulses thrill;
That lift the thoughts above the sordid strife
And call to loftier, fairer, holier life —
That voice through all my being surged and swelled
And restless doubt and fear forever quelled.
The very air was tremulous with joy,
No anxious thoughts could vex, no cares annoy;
And when the last sweet strains had died away
The heavens and earth were bright with coming day.
Deep in my heart responsive echoes rang,
And glad with grateful praises, softly sang.

CLXXVIII

Lord of my waiting soul, Thou Saviour dear,
Why should I longer doubt, what shall I fear?
Come dwell with me, forever be my guest,
That I may share Thy toil and know Thy rest.
Thou showest me a foregleam of the day,
To cheer my drooping heart and light my way.
Even though the path I cannot plainly see,
Through the drear wilderness I follow Thee.
Thou every erring step wilt guide aright
Till night is gone and I behold the light.

CLXXIX

And then a sound of triumph I could hear
Ring through the air around me far and near,
As if from Earth's vast multitudes a cry
Of joy arose and rent the echoing sky;
Innumerable voices from above
Hailing the victory of Almighty Love;
Voices of loved and lost ones gone before,
Of countless hosts that walk the earth no more,
Of spirits shining with celestial light,
Angels of God, archangels clothed with might;

Carl Kirsbach
'38

Chanting the praises of their risen Lord,
Worthy by Heaven and Earth to be adored—

CLXXX

Slain by the Son of God All-glorious
Over our ancient foes victorious,
Evil shall die, and man at last be free,
Crowned with the joy of his high destiny.
Then shall the mighty outspread arms of Love,
Down-reaching from our Father's home above,
Embrace a universe redeemed from sin
And gather all His long-lost children in.
To unimagined heights of glory led,
To powers unknown attaining, like our Head,
Like Him, mankind at one with God shall be,
God all in all, oh wondrous unity!
Forever then shall darkness flee away
Before the glories of triumphant Day;
Storm shall be past and every discord cease
And man shall walk with God in endless peace.

EPILOGUE

The song is done. Would I could nobler praise
Waft to Thy love-built throne, Ancient of Days!
Would I could lay, O Christ, at Thy dear feet
Gifts, for the Son of Man's adorning meet;
Yet, when these faltering lips are dust,
Some sweeter singer shall, I trust,
With eyes aglow, facing the Morning Star,
Awe-thrilled at sight of the Dayspring's triumph-car—
Stress of Thy weary travail near its close—
Might of Thy love disarming all Thy foes—
The cry of battle stilled, the ages ripe
Through struggles vast, approaching Thy fair type—
In numbers never breathed by man before,
Sweeter than bird-song, deeper than ocean's roar,
With heart aflame, swept by seraphic fire,
With hands that, flying, thrill the ecstatic wire,
In loftier, raptured measures praising Thee,
Herald Thy universal Victory!

AFTERMATH

1914

THE PRESENCE IN THE CAMP

Was it a mocking dream
That set our hearts on fire, that led us on
To loftier, nobler heights than man had scaled?
Was it an empty dream, that this, God's world—
Thrilling with beauty, mother of mighty nations
Close-knit by common thought that flies afar
From the incessant press, and by swift keels
Ploughing all seas, and by the aerial wave
Girdling the earth with its miraculous whisper—
This federated world, to brotherhood
Should grow erelong, united and complete,
Unfolding powers unknown for commonweal,
August in Liberty's fast rising light?

What frightful incubus is this whose weight,
Grip of whose talons in my trembling flesh,
Forces me down the shrieking chasm of night
Where seas of blood break on Tartarean shores,
And Hate, infernal Hate laughs at Despair?

Is this vast chaos of embattled hosts—
Earth sick with blood, night hideous with flame
Of burning home, of desecrated shrine,
Terror of slaughter, agony of fear,
Youth of the nations cut down ere their time,
Bloom of humanity crushed, genius deflowered,
Daughters of Science, Heaven-born, wondrous fair,
Destined to crown Earth's myriad homes with joy,
Prostitute, sold to the shameless god of War,
Our hopes, our fair ideals in the dust,
Things of the spirit trampled under foot
With **hatred, hatred** broadcast everywhere—
As if some monstrous crater, charged with fires
Hurled from the subterranean abyss,
Had overflowed the astonished world with ruin—
Is this vast chaos of o'erwhelming woe
The answer to our prayers! Is Love defeated?

Love knows no death. The offended Majesty
Of Love Almighty brooks no contradiction.

Against His might no power may long endure;
Love is all-strong, relentless and immortal,
The nations overturning, overturning,
Torn by the ploughshare till the furrow bloom
With golden sheaves to feed the famished peoples,
With rose and lily redolent of praise.
So precious in His sight is Liberty—
Room for man's godlike spirit to unfold—
So great the undreamed-of treasures safely held
In store for man in the oncoming years,
That He would sweep the enemies of light,
The insolent powers of evil from his path,
E'en at the price of the world's present woe.

The savagery and Paganism old
That in their cruel, noisome folds would smother
The Word Divine, given to heal the nations;
Which have thought scorn of love and gentleness,
Crowning with honor Dogma, Rite and Force—
Justice cast out, that Greed may take his fill—
These must the Church slough off, and even now
The surgery of God—keen and unerring—
Cuts deep among the vitals of the world,
That the world die not, but live unto Him—
Things of the spirit mastering the flesh.

Through all the rage of conflict, through the dark
Pall that hangs, mourning, o'er the bloody field;
Through all the shame, the inhuman crime and
shame
Of stealthy submarine, of air-dropped bomb,
Pierces my soul with horror the dread cry!
"I came not to send peace, but" (Merciful
Heavens!) "a sword."

With wounded hands and feet, with spear-pierced
side,
Risen from the dead, alive forevermore,
Behold a Presence 'mid the armed hosts,
Shaping man's wrath and greed, ruthless ambition,
Desperate valor, wan starvation, death,
To higher ends than purblind eyes can see;
Leading the warring nations after Him
Through all the turmoil, carnage and despair,
Leading the world, through sacrifice, to Life.

Courage, faint heart! The world's fierce travail-
throes
Bring to the birth a new world wherein man
Shall nearer draw to God, a fairer world
Bought by the tears and blood of martyred
millions.

Death is not death to Love, nor wounds nor tears
Aught to delay His purpose. For each cry
Bleeds His paternal heart; our pain is His.
In His clear sight all shrinks to nothingness
Before the eternal welfare of His child—
Love's consummation high, ineffable.

O, Mystery of Love! Love's consummation
Must be some vast, some all-inclusive good
Reaching beyond this world deluged in blood,
Scarred deep with sin and woe immeasurable,
Sacrifice such as this to justify.
Yet He who placed His children here knew well
The cost and knowing, He created man.
FEAR NOT! ALMIGHTY LOVE IS AT THE HELM.

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NOTE.—In this edition of *Christus Victor* italic letters are used in addition to the Roman numerals, where a new strophe is introduced, or the position of an old one is changed, in order to avoid altering the Roman numerals, by means of which reference has been made to many strophes in reviews, press-notices, and letters commenting on the poem.

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